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第2巻!!
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D伯爵と妖しいペットたちが
大暴れ!!

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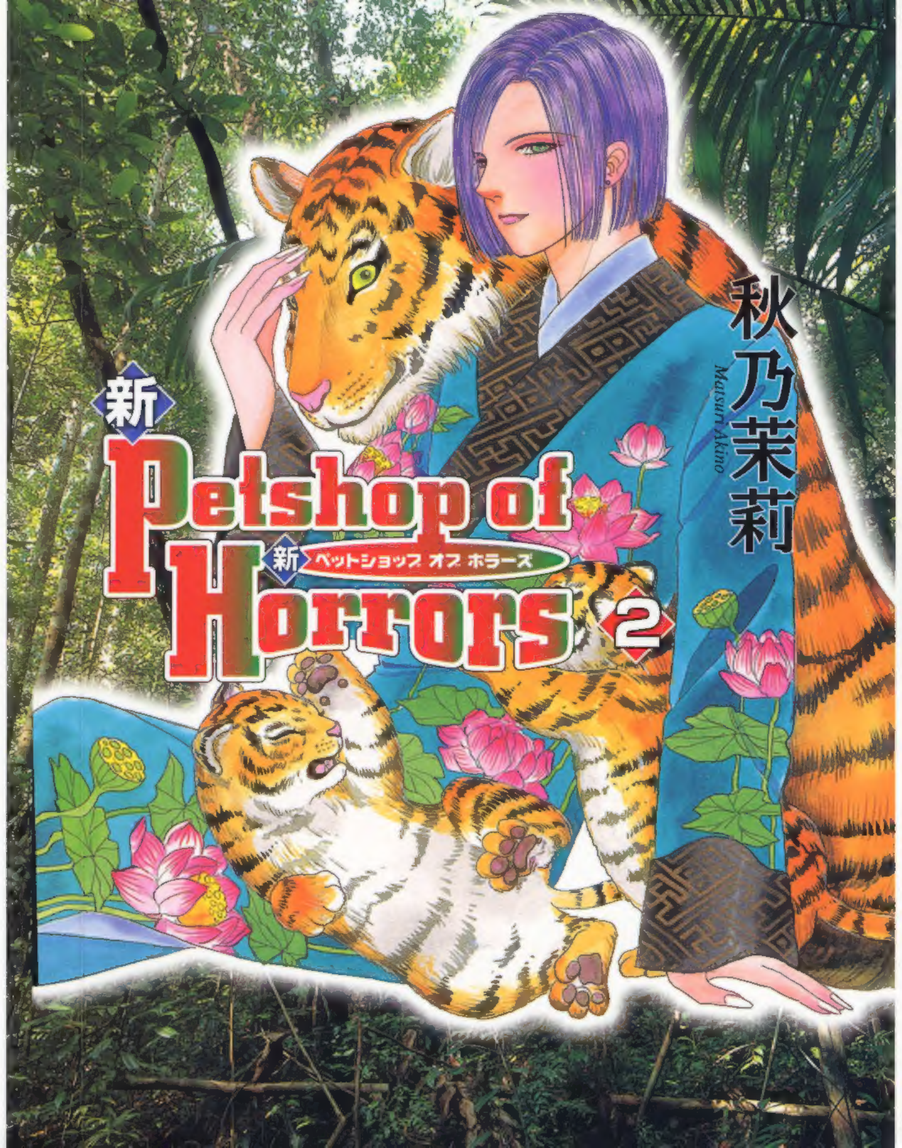

眠れぬ夜の
奇妙な話
コミックス

新 Petshop of Horrors 2

新ペットショップ オブ ホラーズ

秋乃茉莉

朝日ソノラマ

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TOKYO
Pet Shop of Horrors

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VOLUME 2

BY

MATSURI AKINO

TOKYOPOP®

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Neo Chinatown
Tokyo, Japan

Dear Father,

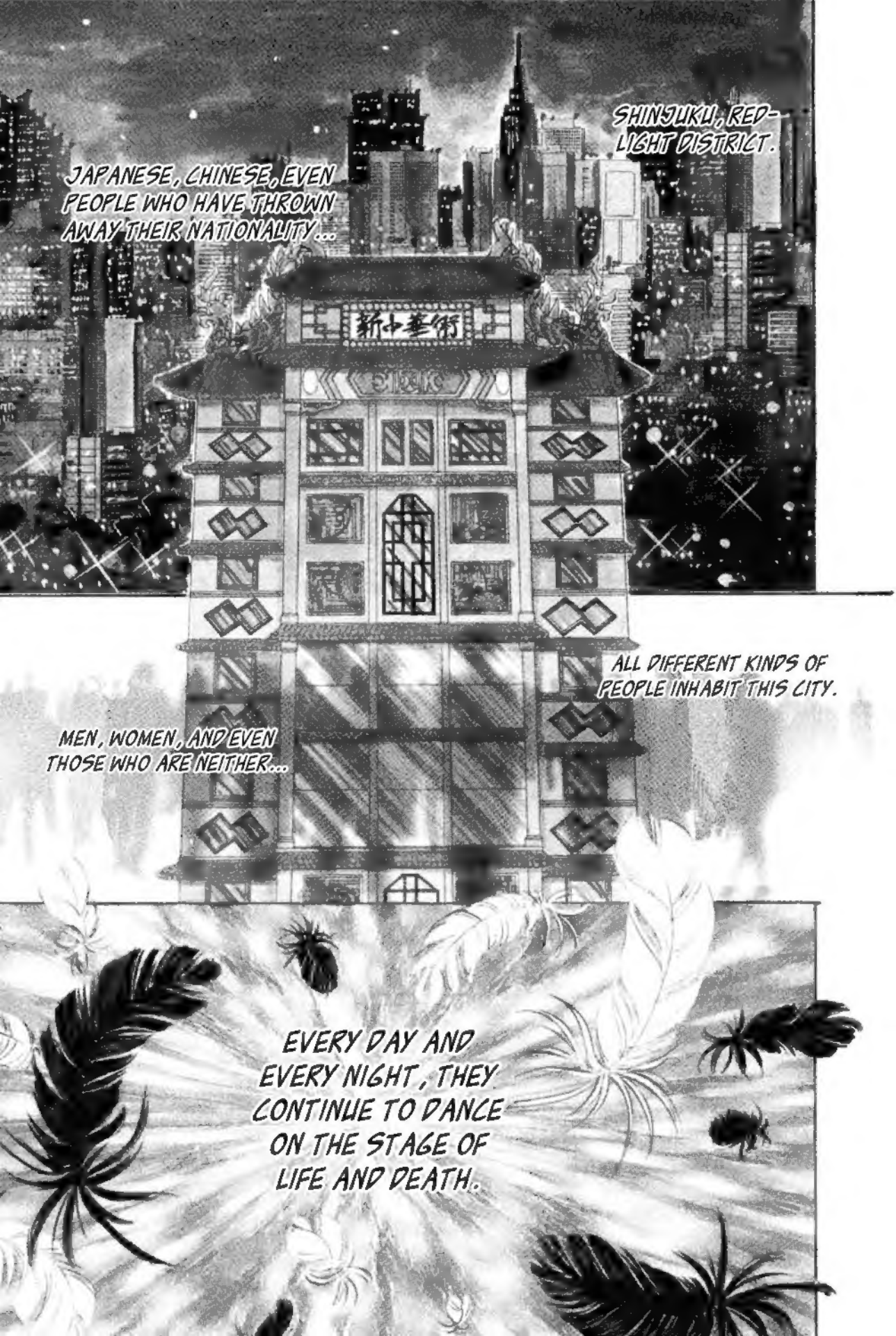
I hope this message finds you happy and in good health. I apologize for not keeping in better touch, but my duties overseeing business in Neo Chinatown has made correspondence difficult.

Take it as a good sign because business is good. We just had a tenant lease the vacant lot on the 13th floor. He's an odd gentleman., But his credit checked out, and he seemed more than happy to pay us what we were asking for. He's some sort of Chinese count, it seems, and he'll be running a pet shop focusing on exotic, hard-to-obtain animals. Apparently, he's operated similar businesses all over the world, most recently in America. He seems to stick to Chinatowns, which makes sense considering his heritage. Still, he's new to Japan, and this is his first time operating out of a Chinatown like ours. It will be interesting to see how he does.

I'm slightly uneasy because I did receive an e-mail shortly after signing his lease from an anonymous source saying that he left America under mysterious circumstances and is wanted by the Los Angeles Police Department for suspicion of murder. I dismissed the message as a prank, however, considering most of the words were misspelled and it also mentioned that the count can make animals look and talk like human beings. I will be keeping an eye on him, however.

Please give my regards to mother, and rest assured that I have things well in hand over here.

Best regards,
Woo-Fei


SHINJUKU, RED-LIGHT DISTRICT.
JAPANESE, CHINESE, EVEN PEOPLE WHO HAVE THROWN AWAY THEIR NATIONALITY...
新中華街
ALL DIFFERENT KINDS OF PEOPLE INHABIT THIS CITY.
MEN, WOMEN, AND EVEN THOSE WHO ARE NEITHER...
EVERY DAY AND EVERY NIGHT, THEY CONTINUE TO DANCE ON THE STAGE OF LIFE AND DEATH.

第4話／Decoration

Kyaaa!
Heh heh heh...
Ho ho ho ho!
IS THIS SOME KIND OF PARTY?
OH MY! WELCOME, TAIZUU.
Hee hee!
WHO'S HE?! HE'S HANDSOME!
YOU'RE THE MANAGER OF THIS BUILDING!
HOW WONDERFUL!

OOH, MY GOODNESS. IT'S ALREADY THIS LATE?
WE BECAME SO PREOCCUPIED WITH OUR CONVERSATION.
I HAVE TO GO TO WORK.
ME TOO.
WELL, THEN... THANK YOU FOR THE MEAL, COUNT!
PLEASE BE SURE TO COME BY OUR PLACE NEXT TIME.
YES, WITH PLEASURE
店物寮
WHAT WAS WITH THAT GROUP?!
DON'T TELL ME THEY'RE THE PROSTITUTES FROM YOUR SHOP--
AGAIN, YOU MAKE SUCH STRANGE INSINUATIONS.
THEY ARE MERELY WOMEN I KNOW FROM A NAIL SALON. THEY WORK AROUND HERE.
OH...AND HALF OF THEM ARE ACTUALLY MEN.
SHEET!

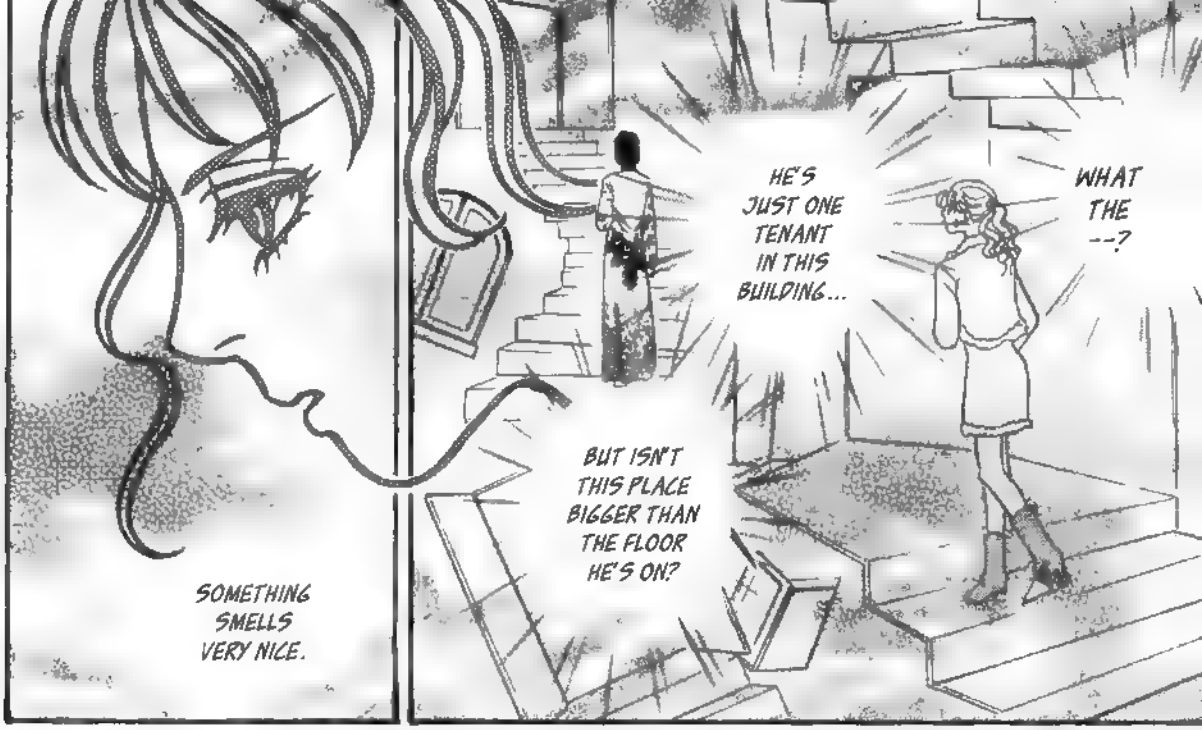
IF THE JAPANESE POLICE GET WIND OF THIS, I'LL BE FEELING THE HEAT AS WELL.
I CAN'T ALLOW HIM TO DO ANYTHING HE WANTS IN MY BUILDING.
THAT IS SLAVERY!!
THERE HAVE BEEN RUMORS OF PROSTITUTION IN THIS PET SHOP. AND NOT ONLY ONE NIGHT STANDS--NO, THEY SAY THAT FOR A PRICE YOU CAN HAVE THEM FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.
SUSPICIOUS!!
WELCOME.
UM...
I CAN PAY ANY AMOUNT OF MONEY.
I HEARD THAT IF I ASKED YOU, I WOULD BE ABLE TO GET MY HANDS ON ANY KIND OF PET.
SIR...
I WAS TOLD ABOUT YOU BY A MAN I KNOW...
ARE YOU THE ONE THEY CALL D?
YES.

パム
PLEASE TAKE YOUR TIME.
I SEE... I WILL EXCUSE MYSELF NOW.
AH, YES.
WE CAN DISCUSS THE DETAILS BACK HERE.
AH...
HERE WE ARE, SIR...
PLEASE HAVE A SEAT.
AS YOU EXPECTED, THIS STORE HAS ALL KINDS OF ANIMALS FROM ANCIENT TO NEW, AS WELL AS FROM THE EAST AND THE WEST.
OF COURSE WE HAVE POPULAR ANIMALS, BUT WE HAVE ANIMALS THAT BARELY SLIDE PAST THE C.I.T.E.S. LIST AS WELL.
WE EVEN HAVE A FEW THINGS THAT ARE CONSIDERED TABOO IN THIS COUNTRY...

I HID IT IN THE PET SHOP A WHILE AGO.
IT'S A LISTENING DEVICE
WHAT IS THAT?
SHH!
TAIZUU?
YOU HAVE TO CATCH HIM IN THE ACT OF RECEIVING THE ITEM.
FOLLOW THAT MAN.
YES!
A WOMAN WILL PROBABLY BE SENT TO HIS HOME OR HOTEL LATER.
OF COURSE!
IT LOOKS LIKE HE MADE A SALE OF AN ILLEGAL ANIMAL TO THAT MAN.
AS I EXPECTED, THAT COUNT D...
BUT IT SEEMS HE IS LEAVING EMPTY HANDED.

UH... UM...
DO YOU NEED SOMETHING FROM THE SHOP?
COUNT, SHOULDN'T WE OPEN SOON?
THAT'S TRUE.
MY, WHAT A LOVABLE ABYSSINIAN CAT.
ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A HUSBAND FOR THIS LADY?
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING ...
IT'S NOT LIKE I BOUGHT HER AT THIS STORE. SHE'S ALREADY AN ADULT, AND MIGHT NOT BE WORTH SELLING...
BUT WHEN I BOUGHT HER, SHE COST ME $2,500.
UH...
I HAVE HER PUREBRED CERTIFICATION RIGHT HERE.
HOW ABOUT $1,000? NO, I'LL EVEN TAKE $500.
TH-THAT'S NOT IT. ACTUALLY, UM...
I WAS WONDERING IF YOU COULD BUY HER.

I UNDERSTAND.
$2,500... IS THAT WHAT YOU SAID? I WILL TAKE HER IN FOR THAT.
REALLY?!
……
ミャオー
IN EXCHANGE...
EXCHANGE?
ドギ
YOU MUST TAKE ONE OF THE PETS IN THIS STORE IN EXCHANGE.
HUH? BUT, I ALREADY DON'T...
I WILL GIVE YOU THE MONEY YOU NEED TO CARE FOR IT.
……
DO WE HAVE A DEAL? THEN PLEASE COME THIS WAY.


SOMETHING SMELLS VERY NICE.
BUT ISN'T THIS PLACE BIGGER THAN THE FLOOR HE'S ON?
HE'S JUST ONE TENANT IN THIS BUILDING...
WHAT THE --?

la la la!
PLEASE OPEN THIS DOOR.

I EVEN HEAR MUSIC.
IT SOUNDS LIKE THEY'RE HAVING A GOOD TIME.
VOICES?

THESE MEN ARE--?!
OH MY GOD!

ADAM IS FAMOUS FOR HIS DANCING.
JIN HERE HAS A VERY BEAUTIFUL VOICE.
WE HAVE EVERYTHING HERE.
PLEASE, TAKE ONE HOME WITH YOU.
WHAT?!
...TO BEAUTIFUL TYPES..
FROM MUSCULAR TYPES...

WELCOME, MASTER!!
BESIDES THE P-PET SHOP, YOU'RE ALSO RUNNING A HOST CLUB?!
NO. THEY ARE DEFINITELY PETS.
SO, IN OTHER WORDS, YOU ARE THEIR--

REN?
I-I HAVE...
I HAVE REN!!
I CAN'T LET MY FEELINGS BE WAVERED BY THESE MEN!
NO... NO WAY!!
HE IS...MY LOVER!!
THAT'S RIGHT. REN FROM PARAISO.
HE'S THE MOST POPULAR HOST ON KUYAKUSHO STREET.
I HAVE TO GET HIM A NEW INSTRUMENT THIS WEEK.
OTHERWISE IT WILL AFFECT HIS REPUTATION.
REN JUST CAN'T DO WITHOUT ME.
I SEE. THAT IS WHY YOU NEED THE MONEY.

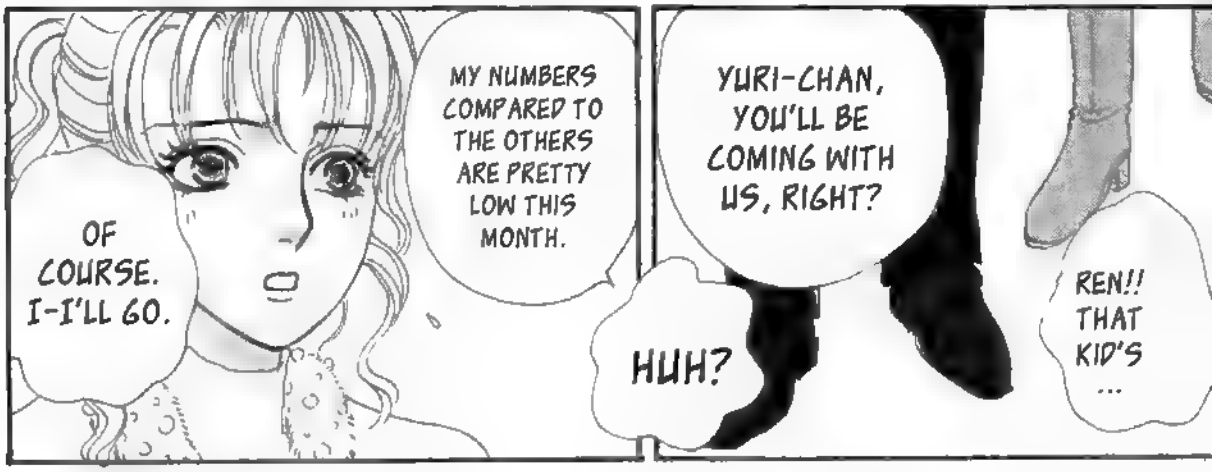
...I THINK A PET FROM THIS SHOP WILL BE BETTER.
AS A LOVER...
THEN I WILL INSIST MORE STRONGLY.
SO I CAN'T JUST SWITCH OVER TO ANOTHER HOST--

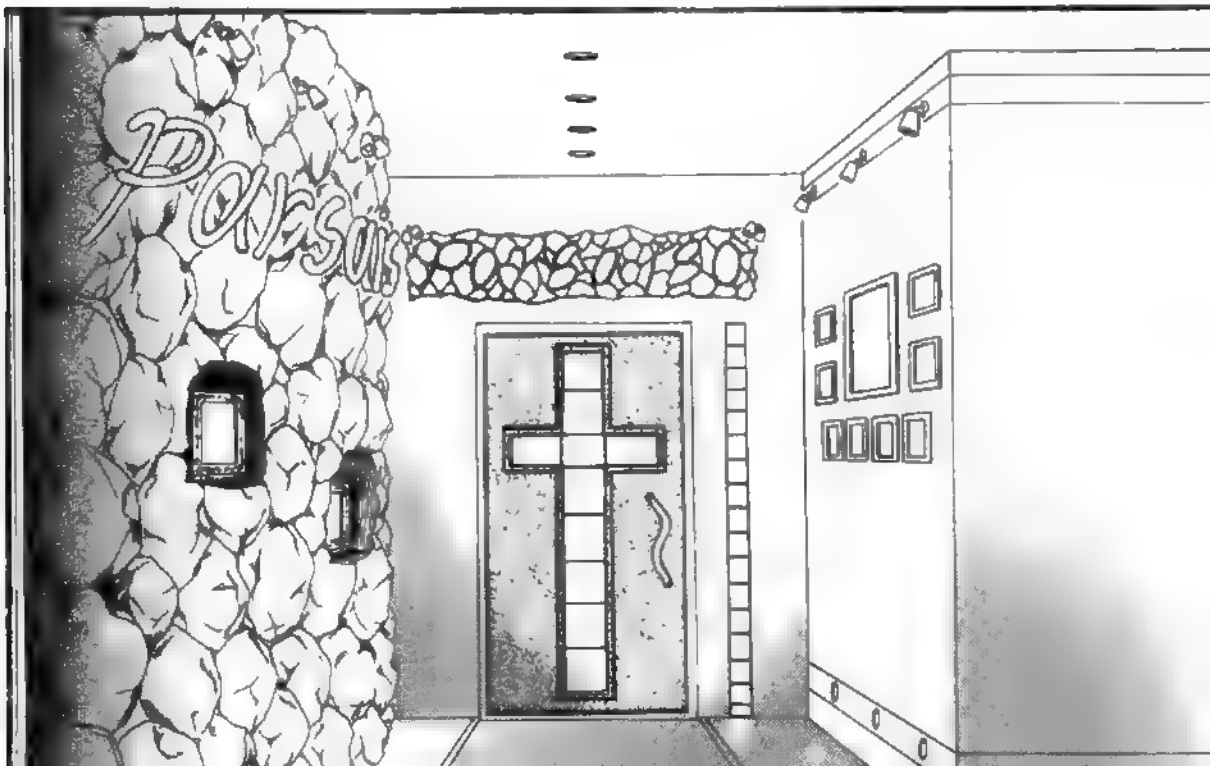
I MEAN... HUH?
HOW DID WE GET OUTSIDE?!
AAAH!
SORRY. SORRY.
WH- WHAT?! SO STRONG!
HERE. $2,500.
THANK YOU.
YURI-CHAN?
REN?!
WHAT'S GOING ON?! I WAS IN THE PET SHOP!
I HAVE TO GET BACK!
HUH?
IF IT'S THE MONEY, I ALREADY HAVE IT, MASTER.

IT-IT'S NOT LIKE THAT! HE IS--
NICE TO MEET YOU! I AM YURIKO-SAN'S COUSIN, HIROSHI.
HIROSHI?!
COUSIN?
WHO'S YOUR FRIEND?
ARE YOU FROM ANOTHER...?
I DROPPED OUT OF COLLEGE AND CAME TO TOKYO TO LOOK FOR WORK.
THE ONLY PERSON I CAN DEPEND ON HERE IS YURIKO-SAN.
TH-THAT'S RIGHT.
HE'S MORE THAN JUST A RELATIVE. HE'S LIKE MY LITTLE BROTHER!
YOU MUST BE REN-SAN?
HUH?
YOU'RE JUST AS COOL AS YURIKO-SAN SAID!

WAS HE JEALOUS?
REN...
OKAY, I SEE.
LITTLE BROTHER ...
HUH?!
HI-HIROSHI?!
PLEASE LET ME WORK AT THE PARAISO!!
UM... REN-SAN, I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK OF YOU.
WELL, YOU'RE NOT BAD LOOKING.
HMM.
BEING A HOST ISN'T AS EASY AS PEOPLE THINK, YOU KNOW.
REN?!
I UNDERSTAND!
...IF I DON'T HURRY AND START SENDING SOME MONEY BACK TO MY PARENTS IN THE COUNTRY, THEY MIGHT TRY TO PULL ME BACK--
I CAN'T BE A BURDEN ON YURIKO-SAN FOREVER, AND...

I WILL DO ANYTHING-- EVEN DISHWASHING AND TOILET CLEANING.
JUST BECAUSE YOU ARE THE COUSIN OF A CLIENT DOESN'T MEAN I'LL BE EASY ON YOU.
WELL, THEN... HOW ABOUT I INTRODUCE YOU TO THE BOSS?
YES! THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
PLEASE LET ME HELP, REN-SAN.
I UNDERSTAND!

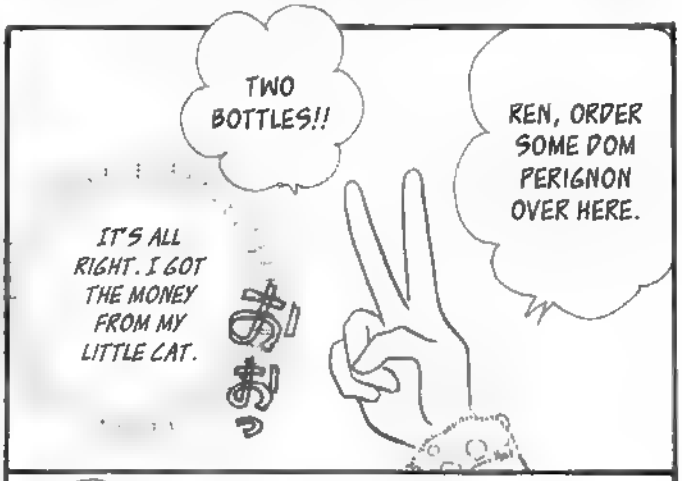

MY NUMBERS COMPARED TO THE OTHERS ARE PRETTY LOW THIS MONTH.
OF COURSE. I-I'LL GO.
YURI-CHAN, YOU'LL BE COMING WITH US, RIGHT?
HUH?
REN!! THAT KID'S ...


DOMINUS

WELCOME!
GOOD EVENING, YURIKO-SAN.
TH-THANK YOU.
WE'RE A LITTLE LOW ON BOTTLES, BUT WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE?
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S SAYING THAT. I HOPE HE'S NOT HERE TO MESS UP THE PARAISO.
WHOA! SO THIS IS A HOST CLUB!
JUST LIKE I THOUGHT-- ALL THE MEN OF TOKYO LOOK SO HANDSOME!

THEY'RE TSUKASA-SAN'S REGULARS.
IT LOOKS LIKE TSUKASA-SAN WILL BE NUMBER ONE IN SALES AGAIN THIS MONTH.
WE'LL HAVE A BOTTLE OF DOM PERIGNON OVER HERE!
L-LET'S SEE...
MAYBE JUST SOME HENNESEY ..
Menu

AS I THOUGHT...
...REN JUST CAN'T DO WITHOUT ME.

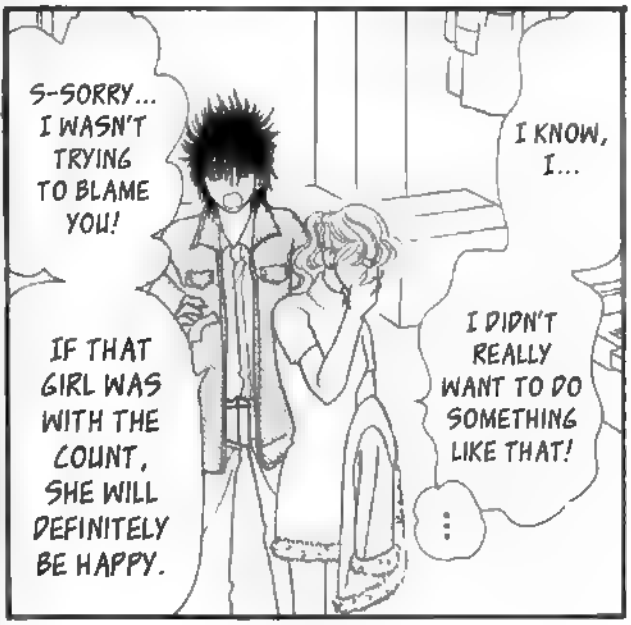

TWO BOTTLES!!
REN, ORDER SOME DOM PERIGNON OVER HERE.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. I GOT THE MONEY FROM MY LITTLE CAT.
おおっ

YURIKO-SAN, YOU'RE THE BEST! ♡
YOU'RE GREAT, YURI-CHAN!
Menu

IT LOOKS SO BARE.
THIS IS YOUR PLACE, YURIKO-SAN?
OH, B-BE QUIET!
HMM... THAT'S WHY YOU SOLD YOUR CAT, TOO.
OTHER THAN MY BAG AND CLOTHES, I SOLD EVERYTHING OR USED IT ALL.

ONE OF MY BOSSES TOOK ME TO MY FIRST HOST CLUB.
THE REGULARS WERE MADE UP OF CELEBRITIES, MADAMS AND WOMEN WHO OWNED BUSINESSES
THERE WERE ALSO A FEW HOSTESSES AND PORN STARS.
IT WASN'T A PLACE WHERE A DULL SECRETARY WOULD GO.

...


S-SORRY... I WASN'T TRYING TO BLAME YOU!
I KNOW, I...
IF THAT GIRL WAS WITH THE COUNT, SHE WILL DEFINITELY BE HAPPY.
I DIDN'T REALLY WANT TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT!
...

IT WAS THEN...
I FELT TOTALLY OUT-OF-PLACE. IT WAS SUCH A DIFFERENT WORLD.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUSH YOURSELF AND ORDER EXPENSIVE DRINKS.
I'M JUST HAPPY TO BE ABLE TO SEE YOUR FACE, YURIKO-SAN.
...SOMEDAY, DEFINITELY... I BELIEVED THAT HE WOULD BE NUMBER ONE AT THE PARAISO.
REN WAS RANKED AS THE NUMBER THREE HOST THERE AT THE TIME, BUT...
IT'S BECAUSE YOU ARE SPECIAL.
I HAVE TO DO MY BEST TO MAKE REN THE PRINCE OF KABUKI-CHO.

POISON
THE JOB OF A NEWCOMER STARTS WITH CLEANING UP THE STORE AND ASSISTING OTHER HOSTS.
YES!
YOU STAND OUTSIDE AND CATCH POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS WALKING BY.
IT'S LIKE, WELL. LIKE PICKING UP WOMEN.
YES!
THEN, UNTIL YOU HAVE CLIENTS THAT SPECIFICALLY ASK FOR YOU...
...YOU JOIN A TEAM OF ADVERTISING HOSTS AND BRING UP THE MOOD OF A TABLE.
AND YOU TRY TO GET THE CUSTOMERS TO ORDER EXPENSIVE DRINKS.
IN ORDER TO KEEP THE MAIN HOST FROM GETTING TOO DRUNK, YOU MAKE SURE TO DRINK. THE POINT IS TO EMPTY LOTS OF BOTTLES.
I SEE.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO BE ABLE TO RECOGNIZE AND ACT THE PART THAT THE CLIENT DESIRES.
...GETTING SPOILED BY THE WOMAN LIKE A LITTLE BROTHER...
...TREATING THE WOMAN LIKE A QUEEN, OR...
BEING UNDER-STANDING AND CLOSE LIKE A FRIEND, OR...
BUT YOU CAN'T JUST THINK OF A CLIENT AS A TREE THAT GROWS MONEY.
ALL WHILE MAKING HER THINK THAT SHE'S THE MOST AMAZING WOMAN IN THE WORLD.
YOU HAVE TO BECOME HER LOVER FOR A NIGHT.
LOVER...
THE CLIENTS ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS NOT THE REAL WORLD.
BUT, IF YOU FALL IN LOVE, THEN IT ALL COMES TO NOTHING.
THAT IS OUR JOB.
WHILE THEY'RE HERE, YOU PROVIDE THEM WITH A NICE LITTLE DREAM.
THIS IS A HOST CLUB AFTER ALL!

I SAID BUTTERCUPS! USE YOUR EYES AND LOOK FOR SOME!
I'M ON IT!
HEY, SOMEONE GET ME A BOUQUET OF BUTTERCUPS.
BUTTERCUPS AREN'T SOLD IN FLOWER SHOPS.
WHY NOT ROSES OR CARNATIONS?
BUTTER-CUPS?!
TODAY IS THE DAY MATSUI-SAN'S WIFE COMES.
OH, DAMN.
My goodness! Order in a bunch of bottles!
I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU, MADAM.
THIS IS A BETTER PRESENT THAN ANY OTHER FLOWER OR JEWEL!!
I'M SO HAPPY!!
HOW DID YOU KNOW?!
OH MY! REN-CHAN, THIS IS MY BIRTHDAY FLOWER.
THOSE KINDS OF SMALL THINGS ARE IMPORTANT TO A POPULAR HOST.
OH... I SEE.

Slurp!
AND WHY ME?
THE LADIES REQUESTED THAT YOU COME, AS WELL.
BUT THOSE ARE ALL MEN!!
WELL, THEIR HEARTS ARE A WOMAN'S.

IN THE WORLD OF THE WILD, IT IS THE MALES WHO DRESS UP, DANCE AND SING.
ON TOP OF THAT, THEIR DANCE...
...IS ABOUT SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST.
IT IS A DESPERATE QUEST TO PASS ON THEIR DNA.
.....
YOU MIGHT BE GETTING AWAY WITH THIS NOW...
...BUT I'LL GET PROOF OF YOUR SLAVERY TRADE AND KICK YOU OUT OF NEO CHINATOWN.

#17
FINALLY, WE'RE ON TOP!
YOU DID IT, REN-SAN!
REN, $57,000.
I WILL ANNOUNCE THE SCORES SO FAR THIS MONTH IN SALES.
TSUKASA, $56,000.
CONGRATU-LATIONS, REN!
REALLY?!
YEAH! THIS IS BECAUSE OF YOU, YURI-CHAN!
...NEXT WEEK IS MY BIRTHDAY, BUT...
AND SO...
REALLY?!
...I WANT TO BEAT TSUKASA-SAN, COMPLETELY.
THANK GOODNESS...
I WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF YOU ORDERED A CHAMPAGNE TOWER, YURI-CHAN.
HUH?!
I THINK THAT THING COSTS ABOUT $20,000...
CAN YOU?

WHAT SHOULD I DO? $20,000...
THE ONLY WAY I CAN COME UP WITH THAT SORT OF MONEY...
...IS BY SELLING MYSELF.
Ren, I need you for a moment
Sure!
I LOVE YOU, YURI-CHAN.
ALL RIGHT!
O-OF COURSE! SURE!
LEAVE IT TO ME, REN!
...I CAN'T DO THAT!
BUT...
B-BUT... THIS MUCH MONEY...
YURIKO-SAN, HERE YOU GO.
HIRO-SHI?!
THIS IS ALL MY PAY UNTIL TODAY. USE THIS.
I TOLD YOU FROM THE BEGINNING...
...I HAVE BEEN WORKING IN ORDER TO GRANT YOUR WISH, MASTER.
HIRO-SHI...

GOOD EVENING, I'M HIROSHI.
HUH? REQUESTED ME?
THE CLIENTS OVER THERE REQUESTED YOU.
HIROSHI!
MY...
HE'S PRETTY GOOD.
Cheers!
A PRETTY FACE LIKE YOURS IS HARD TO FORGET.
OF COURSE I DID!
YOU WERE HERE LAST WEEK, WEREN'T YOU? I'M PRETTY SURE YOU WERE IN A BLUE DRESS
YOU REMEMBERED ME!
HIS VOICE IS GOOD, TOO!
I'LL DO KEN HIRAI.
HIROSHI, IMITATE THAT SINGER AGAIN.
AH! ALL RIGHT ...

HIROSHI-KUN!
YES, SIR!
THIS TABLE IS CALLING YOU.
I'M SORRY. I'LL SEE YOU LATER.
HIROSHI IS REALLY CUTE.
HE'S A LOT OF FUN, TOO.
AND HE'S SO DOWN TO EARTH!

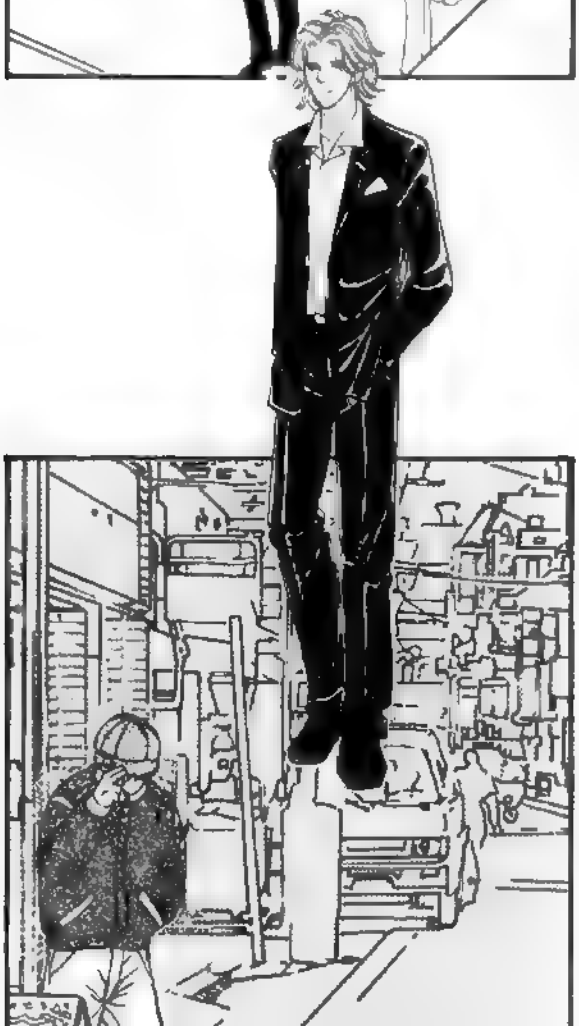
HIROSHI...
HIROSHI-KUN!
THEY SAID IT WAS A PHOTO SHOOT FOR THE HOST CLUB GUIDE.
HIROSHI!
歌舞伎町一番
HEY, HEY, HEY!
HASN'T HIROSHI GAINED A LOT OF MOMENTUM LATELY?
HIS SALES PASSED TSUKASA-SAN AND HE'S NOW NUMBER TWO.
IF YOU FALL FROM NUMBER ONE ONCE, YOUR PRIDE GETS IN THE WAY AND YOU SPIRAL DOWNWARDS.
A LOT OF HIS CLIENTS ARE SWITCHING TO ANOTHER HOST.
IT'S SAD. IT'S LIKE HE'S PAST HIS PRIME.
TSUKASA? HE'S ALREADY DONE FOR.
QUICKER THAN ANYONE COULD NOTICE, HE'S THE TOP IN CUSTOMER REQUESTS.

REN!! TONIGHT WE'LL OPEN A BOTTLE OF ROMANEE CONTI.
LATELY, EVEN REN'S OLD CLIENTS ARE STARTING TO SWITCH OVER TO HIROSHI.
SHH!
HE'S NOT THAT FAR AHEAD OF HIROSHI RIGHT NOW.
REN-SAN HAD BETTER BE CAREFUL.
YURIKO-SAN...
...BECAUSE ALL OF HIROSHI'S EARNINGS GO TO REN'S SALES.
Wow...
IT'S ALL RIGHT, NO MATTER HOW POPULAR HIROSHI BECOMES...
One bottle of Romanee Conti is $30,000
AS LONG AS I STICK WITH HIM, HIS PLACE AS NUMBER ONE IS ETERNAL.

SHE PISSES ME OFF.
SHE'S HOGGING BOTH REN AND HIROSHI.
WHAT IS WITH THAT WOMAN?
AHH!!
HOW WONDERFUL IT FEELS!!
EVERYONE LOOKS AT ME WITH JEALOUSY.

UH... UM... I WAS LOOKING AT YOUR MAGAZINE, BUT...
DO YOU HAVE A HOST YOU'D LIKE TO REQUEST?
WELCOME!
SHE'S OBVIOUSLY IN THE WRONG PLACE.
LOOKS LIKE A BUMPKIN.
WHO IS THAT GIRL?
REN?!
RELAX A BIT.
...YOU STILL LOOK AT OTHER WOMEN?!
I'M SO LOYAL TO YOU, BUT...
WHY?!
HOW ABOUT WE GET A BEER?

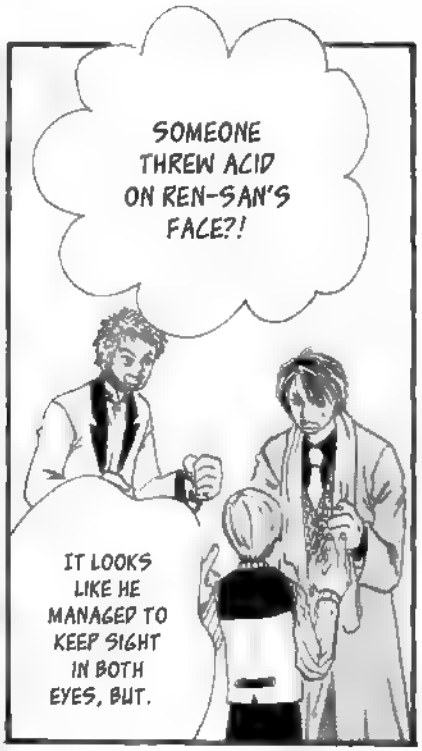
GOOD JOB TONIGHT.
THANKS.



WHY WON'T YOU ONLY BE MINE?!

AAAAAAH!!!
UWAH!!

THEY SAID THEY HAVEN'T CAUGHT HIM YET.
THE CULPRIT?
COULD IT HAVE BEEN TSUKASA-SAN? MAYBE HE WAS JEALOUS OF REN-SAN STEALING HIS SPOT AT THE TOP?
IT COULD ALSO HAVE BEEN HIROSHI. HE WAS NEXT IN LINE, AFTER ALL.


SOMEONE THREW ACID ON REN-SAN'S FACE?!
IT LOOKS LIKE HE MANAGED TO KEEP SIGHT IN BOTH EYES, BUT.

REN?
YOU HAVEN'T TOUCHED YOUR FOOD
YOU HAVE TO EAT WELL.
YOU'RE GOING TO GET BETTER QUICKLY AND MAKE YOUR COMEBACK, RIGHT?

I CAN'T GO BACK TO BEING A HOST ANYMORE.
REN...
YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT.

I CAN'T DO IT ANYMORE.
YURIKO-CHAN...
I CAN'T RETURN TO THE SHOP.
THEY SAID I'LL STILL HAVE THIS BURN EVEN IF I DO HAVE SURGERY.

I'LL BE WITH YOU FOREVER.
YOU HAVE ME.
YURIKO...
YURIKO, I ONLY HAVE YOU.
FINALLY.
FINALLY... I'VE GOTTEN REN'S HEART.
YURIKO-SAN...
HIROSHI?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
カミナカミナ
キィ

I'M LEAVING.
HUH?
BECAUSE NOW I'M JUST A BOTHER, RIGHT?
HIROSHI?
YOUR WISH WAS GRANTED, YURIKO-SAN.
SEE YOU.
HIROSHI?!
WAIT A SECOND!!
HIRO--?!

EVERYONE LEAVES WHEN THEY'VE HAD ENOUGH...
AH!
DID HIROSHI MOVE OUT?
YURIKO, YOU'RE DIFFERENT, RIGHT?
REN?
YOU WON'T THROW ME AWAY, RIGHT?!
I'M BEGGING YOU...
...YURIKO.
WHO?!

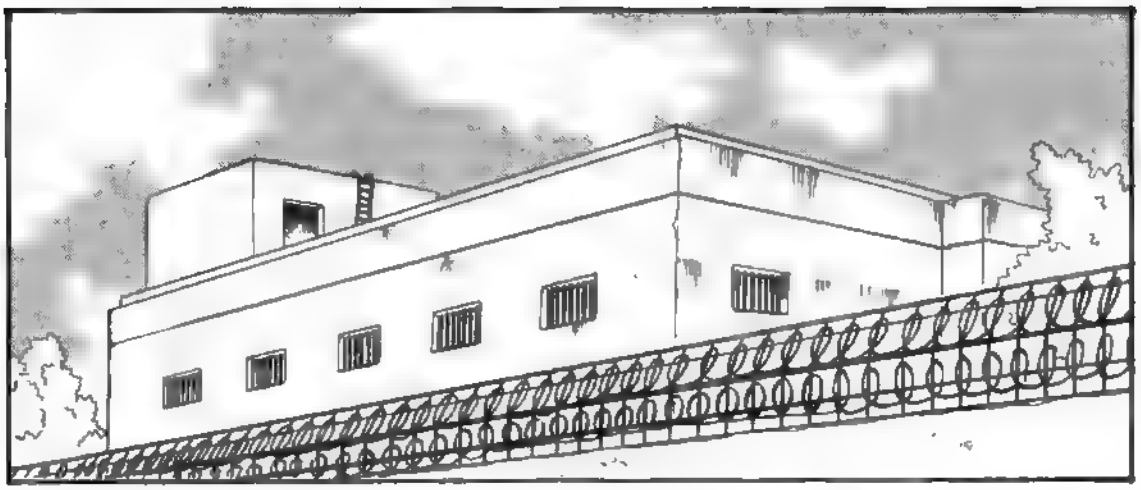
THIS ISN'T THE PRINCE OF KABUKI-CHO!
...PATHETIC MAN IS NOT REN!
WHO IS THIS?
THIS UGLY AND...

KNOCK!
KNOCK!
LET ME GO!!
YES! I'M COMING!
W-WAIT, REN!
AH!
DING
DONG!
DING
DONG!
KNOCK!
KNOCK!
YURIKO?!
Y-YES...
ARE YOU YURIKO MISAKI?
YOU ARE UNDER ARREST FOR EMBEZZLEMENT AT YOUR WORKPLACE.

TAIZUU, THE CLIENT HAS BEGUN TO MOVE
I SEE...
RRR...
IT SEEMS LIKE HE IS CARRYING A LARGE BAG AND HEADING TO THE MOUNTAINS.
OKAY! I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!
YOU FORGOT THIS.
IF THAT'S THE CASE, WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME ALONG?
!!
WHAT WILL YOU DO?
YOU WANTED TO SEE SOME OF THE SPECIAL PETS FROM MY SHOP, CORRECT?
IN EXCHANGE, YOU'LL HAVE TO KEEP IT A SECRET.

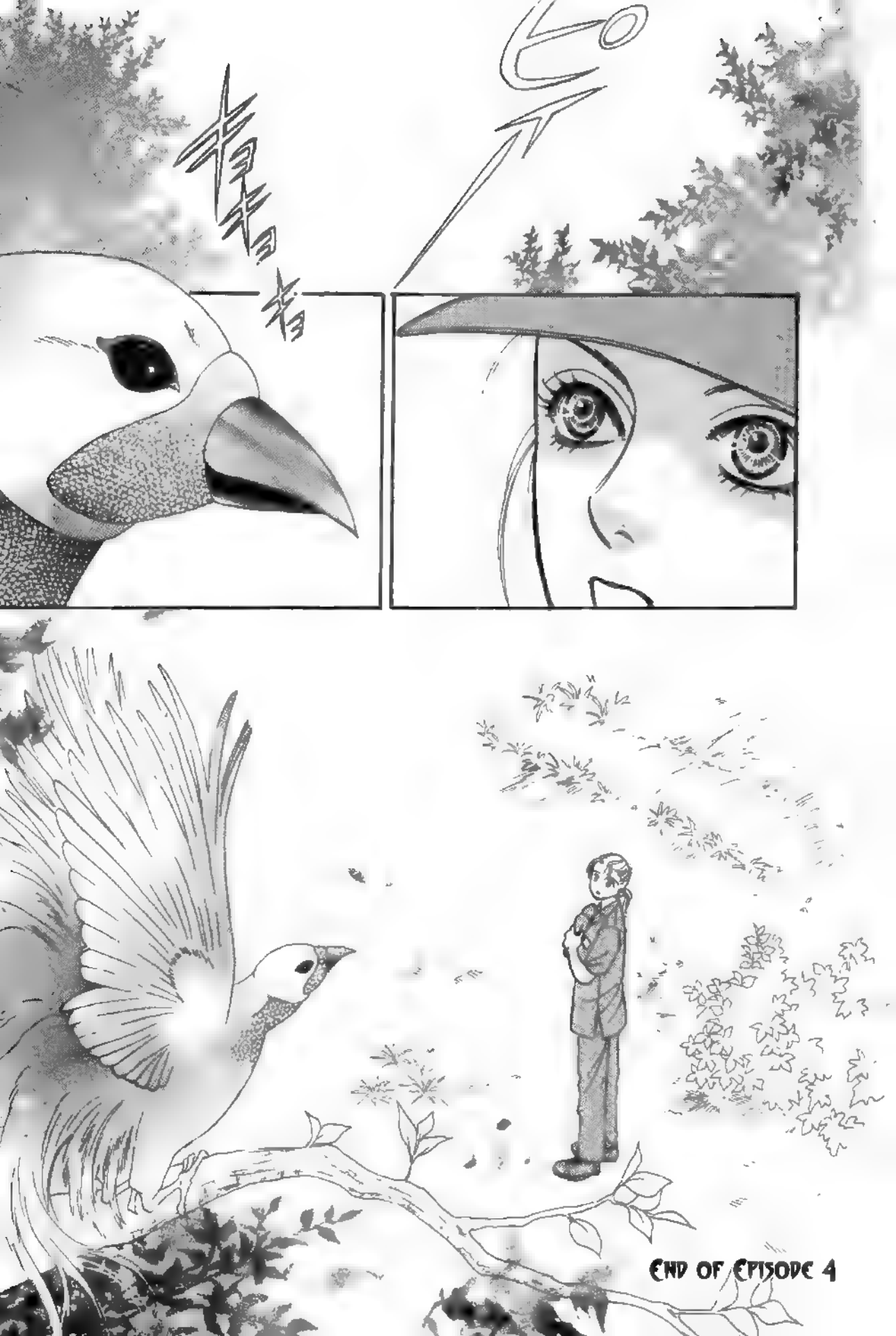
HUH...?!
VULTURES?
SEE, THAT IS WHERE THE SPECIAL PETS ARE STANDING BY.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ALL ALONE IN THE MOUNTAINS?!
JUST A FEW DAYS AGO, HIS LIFE ENDED NATURALLY...
HE MOVED TO JAPAN AND HAS LIVED HERE FOR 40 YEARS.
IT SEEMS LIKE THE CLIENT'S FATHER WAS A VERY STRONG BELIEVER IN TIBETAN BUDDHISM.

There would probably be legal issues as well.
IN JAPAN, THERE WASN'T A METHOD OR A MEANS FOR IT.
...AND HIS LAST REQUEST WAS THAT HIS BODY BE USED AS FOOD FOR THE BIRDS.
SO OUR SHOP AGREED TO DO THE SERVICE FOR HIM.
AARGH!
RIGHT, TAIZUU?
PLEASE MAKE SURE TO KEEP IT A SECRET.



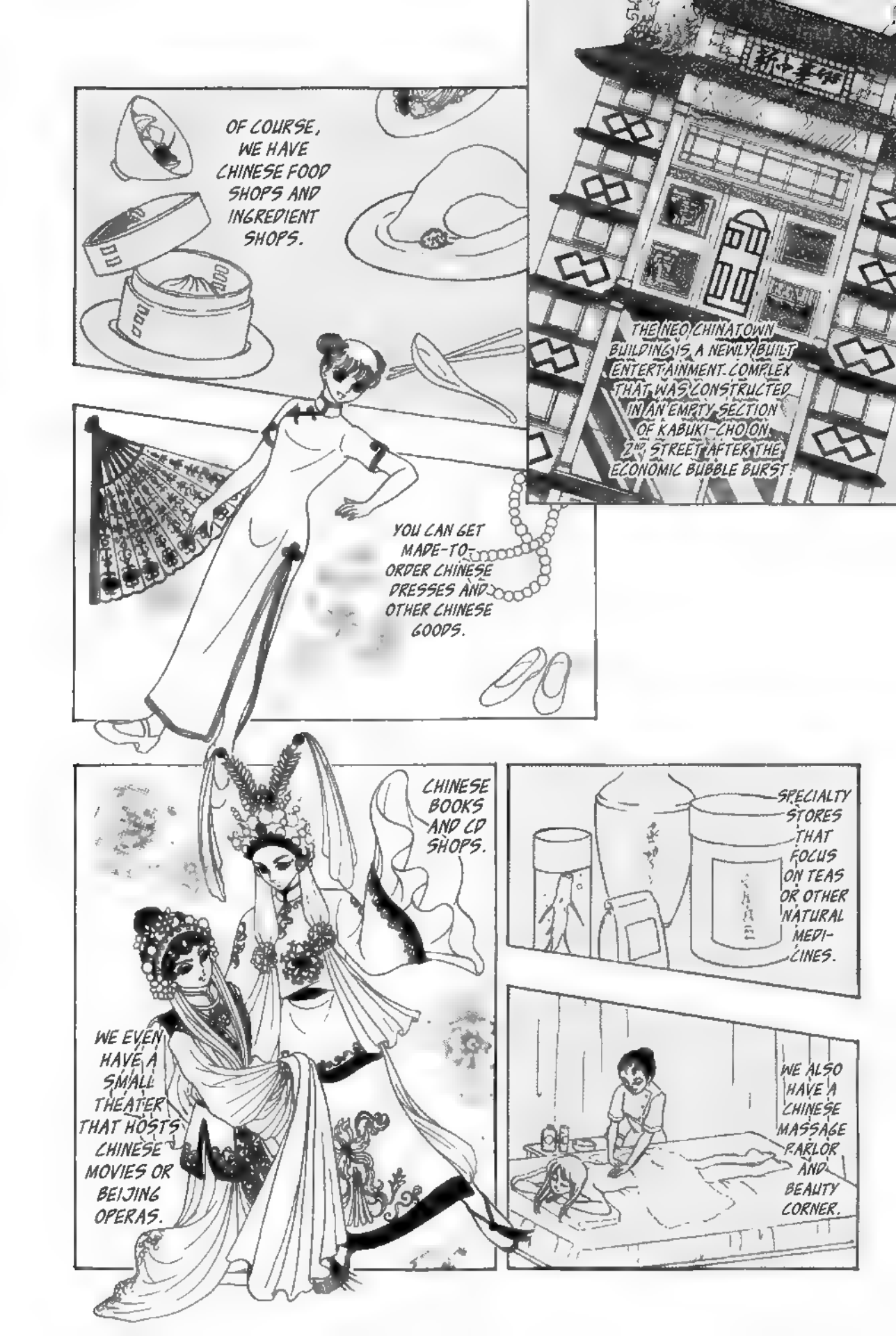
I'VE LOST EVERYTHING.
MY HOUSE AND MY MONEY.
MY JOB AND MY FRIENDS.
EVEN REN'S HEART.

THE WONDERFUL DAYS THAT I SPENT AT KABUKI-CHO...
...SEEM LIKE A DREAM TO ME NOW.
ROOM NUM-BER SEVEN.
IT'S TIME FOR OUTDOOR WORK.
YES.
OH MY... THAT BIRD.
IT'S HERE AGAIN.
IT'S SUCH A PRETTY BIRD.
AND IT'S ALWAYS IN THE SAME PLACE.
I WONDER IF IT WAS SOMEONE'S PET.
.....


END OF EPISODE 4

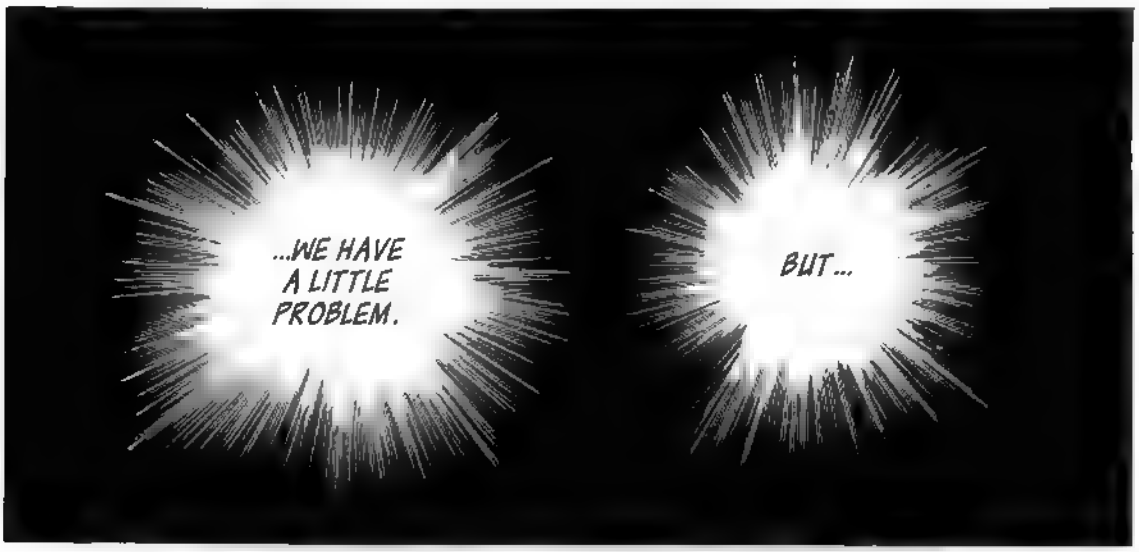
第5話／Dealer

I AM WOO-FEI RAU.
I AM THE OWNER OF THE NEO CHINATOWN BUILDING.
I AM THE INHERITOR OF THE RAU CONGLOMERATE, WHOSE MAIN OFFICE IS LOCATED OVERSEAS. I GRADUATED HARVARD UNIVERSITY, AND HAVE BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT IN FORBES MAGAZINE AND PROFILED IN AMERICA'S WALL STREET JOURNAL.


OF COURSE, WE HAVE CHINESE FOOD SHOPS AND INGREDIENT SHOPS.
THE NEO CHINATOWN BUILDING IS A NEWLY BUILT ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX THAT WAS CONSTRUCTED IN AN EMPTY SECTION OF KABUKI-CHO ON 2ND STREET AFTER THE ECONOMIC BUBBLE BURST
YOU CAN GET MADE-TO-ORDER CHINESE DRESSES AND OTHER CHINESE GOODS.
CHINESE BOOKS AND CD SHOPS.
SPECIALTY STORES THAT FOCUS ON TEAS OR OTHER NATURAL MEDICINES.
WE EVEN HAVE A SMALL THEATER THAT HOSTS CHINESE MOVIES OR BEIJING OPERAS.
WE ALSO HAVE A CHINESE MASSAGE PARLOR AND BEAUTY CORNER.

FROM THE TOP FLOOR TO THE BASEMENT, NEO CHINATOWN IS SET UP SO YOU CAN EXPERIENCE THE ATMOSPHERE OF CHINA WITH EVERY STEP.

WE EVEN MADE NEWS AMONG THE CHINESE COMMUNITY LIVING HERE AS SHINJUKU'S GREAT NEW ATTRACTION.
IT'S A FRESH ENTERTAINMENT ALTERNATIVE TO OLD DESTINATIONS LIKE YOKOHAMA OR KOBE, AND MANY COME TO EXPERIENCE IT.


...WE HAVE A LITTLE PROBLEM.
BUT...

IT'S A YOUNG TENANT NAMED COUNT D WHO OWNS A PET SHOP.
...THE PROBLEM IS THE WAY HE RUNS HIS BUSINESS.
PUTTING THAT ASIDE...
IT SEEMS THAT IN HIS HOMETOWN OF SHANGHAI, THE HEAD OF THE LIU FAMILY AND HIS GRANDFATHER WERE CLOSE, AND HE MANAGED TO OBTAIN SPACE ON THE 13TH FLOOR DURING CONSTRUCTION.
EXCEPT FOR THE RESTAURANTS, ALL THE SHOPS' REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS SHOULD BE FROM 10 A.M. TO 9 P.M., BUT...

IN THE AFTERNOON, HE HAS TEATIME WITH THE AREA'S HOSTESSES AND DRAG QUEENS.
...WHEN IT COMES TO COUNT D, IN THE MORNING HE GOES SHOPPING FOR EXOTIC CANDIES AND SWEETS.
Try the store down the road!
...HE KICKS OUT CUSTOMERS HE DOESN'T LIKE.
Cat-eared passion maid
IN THE EVENING, WHEN YOU THINK HE WOULD FINALLY OPEN UP SHOP...
SOMETIMES HE'LL SELL SUSPICIOUS ANIMALS, AS WELL.
IF YOU BREAK THAT PROMISE, THE SHOP IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENS.
YOU CANNOT GIVE IT WATER AFTER NOON.
GHWE!

...THAT HE MAY BE SELLING "PETS" WHICH ARE ACTUALLY FEMALE AND MALE PROSTITUTES.
BUT THE BIGGEST PROBLEM IS...
AND THESE AREN'T JUST FOR ONE NIGHT STANDS.
SOMETIMES IT'S A BEAUTIFUL, GOLDEN-HAIRED, BLUE-EYED WOMAN...
THEY ARE SOLD AS LIFETIME LOVERS.
SOMETIMES IT IS AN UNDER-AGED CHILD OR A BEAUTIFUL MALE HOST...

IN THIS CITY OF KABUKI-CHO, THE JAPANESE YAKUZA, OLD CHINESE FAMILIES THAT LIVE OVERSEAS, TAIWANESE AND HONG KONG MAFIA, AS WELL AS A BIT OF THE SOUTH KOREAN MAFIA, ALL HOLD POWER
AS WELL AS THE JAPANESE POLICE THAT SEARCH FOR AND ARREST THESE PEOPLE.
...IS OUR SHANGHAI MAFIA'S SAFE HAVEN IN TOKYO.
...ITS OTHER FACE..
JUST BETWEEN US, NEO CHINATOWN IS A LEGAL PLACE OF AMUSEMENT IN THE DAYTIME, BUT...
すずき
歌舞伎町一番街
COFFEE
1F
MORE THAN A TRIANGULAR POWER STRUGGLE, THE DAILY FIGHT FOR POWER IS BETWEEN SIX DIFFERENT GROUPS.
TO DO THAT KIND OF BUSINESS WITHOUT MY APPROVAL IS UNFORGIVABLE!!
AS ITS OWNER, I AM ALSO A "BOSS."
I AM THE LAW OF THIS CITY.
THIS NEO CHINATOWN BUILDING IS A SAFE HOUSE FOR THE SHANGHAI CHINESE.

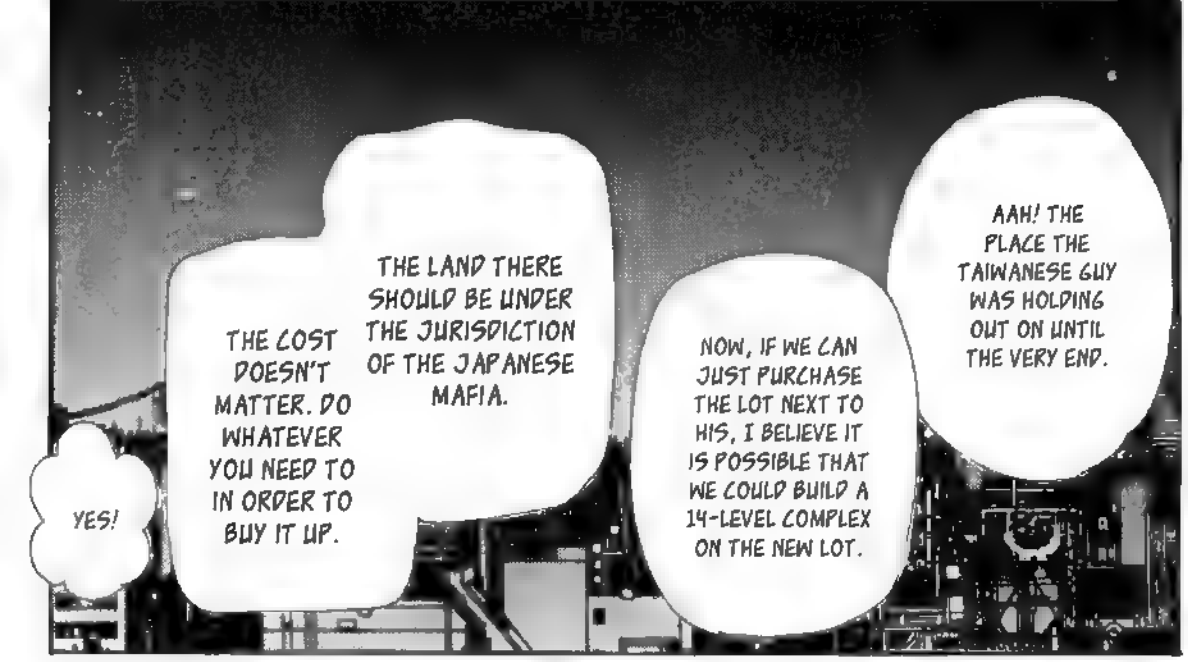
I'LL JUST HAVE TO CLOSE DOWN THAT SHOP FORCIBLY AND KICK HIM OUT
IF COUNT D DOESN'T OBEY IN MY JURISDICTION
ALREADY, SOME OF OUR OLDER LEADERS THINK THAT I AM TOO YOUNG AND WILL FAIL

WHO DOES HE THINK HE--?
NOT TO MENTION THAT THE GUY LOOKS LIKE A WOMAN.
PLUS, I HATE THE WAY HE'S ALWAYS SMILING AT ME IN THAT BELITTLING WAY OF HIS.
TAIZUU?!
TAIZUU?

WH-WHAT DO YOU NEED?
WE WERE SUCCESSFUL IN BUYING THE LOT THAT WE WANTED. THE CONSTRUCTION OF ANOTHER BUILDING ON 3RD STREET WILL START SOON, BUT--

OH... IT'S YOU, CHIN.
AH?
I'VE BEEN CALLING YOUR NAME FOR A WHILE.

TAIZUU?!
AH!


AAH! THE PLACE THE TAIWANESE GUY WAS HOLDING OUT ON UNTIL THE VERY END.
NOW, IF WE CAN JUST PURCHASE THE LOT NEXT TO HIS, I BELIEVE IT IS POSSIBLE THAT WE COULD BUILD A 14-LEVEL COMPLEX ON THE NEW LOT.
THE LAND THERE SHOULD BE UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE JAPANESE MAFIA.
THE COST DOESN'T MATTER. DO WHATEVER YOU NEED TO IN ORDER TO BUY IT UP.
YES!

NOT ONLY THIS BUILDING...
IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE I OWN THIS ENTIRE DISTRICT.

CAN'T THE OWNER OF A BUILDING CHECK IN ON A TENANT'S BUSINESS?
店物
SO?!
HELLO AGAIN, TAIZUU. WHAT IS IT NOW?
TAIZUU ...
THOSE TYPE OF PEOPLE DO NOT EXIST IN MY SHOP.
IF YOU'D LIKE, YOU'RE WELCOME TO SEARCH THROUGH ALL THE ROOMS.
HMPH! I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE PRIVACY OF PEOPLE WHO BUY WOMEN.
...I WOULD LIKE YOU TO RESPECT THE PRIVACY OF MY CLIENTS.
THAT'S FINE WITH ME, BUT...

KLANK
WELCOME!
MY GOODNESS ..
YOU'RE SO SUSPICIOUS!
YOU'RE HOLDING THEM IN A DIFFERENT PLACE TO BE SENT OFF, RIGHT?
I KNOW THAT THERE ARE NO WOMEN HERE.

OUR SHOP HAS ALL THE POPULAR PUPPIES AND KITTENS, AS WELL AS EXOTIC ANIMALS THAT BARELY PASS THE C.I.T.E.S. LIST.
THAT'S IT!!
PLEASE LOOK AROUND AT YOUR LEISURE.
23

The road of a snake is a snake's.
WE ARE A SHOP THAT SELLS A VARIETY OF RARE SPECIES.
AS YOU SAY, AMONG MY CLIENTELE THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO WANT ANIMALS THAT RANK ABOVE THE NORM.
TAIZUU .
Like male calico cats.
Or albino lizards
WE WISH TO FULFILL THE NEED OF EVERY CUSTOMER.
WHAT IS IT, TAIZUU?!
IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING IN VIOLATION OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST, WON'T YOU BE SHUT DOWN?
WHAT DOES THAT "BARELY" MEAN?!

CUT THE CRAP!
FOR THAT, THE TRUST BETWEEN ME AND THE CLIENT--
FOR THAT, WE HAVE TO BE PREPARED TO CARRY SOME DANGEROUS SPECIES.
IN ORDER TO CARE FOR A RARE SPECIES, YOU MUST HAVE THE INCLINATION AND THE MONEY.
MONEY?!
.....
IF YOU'RE JUST WINDOW SHOPPING, I REFUSE.
I WOULD LIKE TO SEE SOME OF THESE RARE ANIMALS THAT YOU HAVE.
I UNDER-STAND.
IF YOU SAY SO, I WILL SHOW YOU.
IF I FELT LIKE IT, I WOULD BE ABLE TO GET A TIGER OR AN ELEPHANT, AS WELL AS OBTAIN A PLACE TO CARE FOR THEM!!
WHO DO YOU THINK I AM?
I'M WOO-FEI RAU.

ON ONE CONDITION!
IF YOU LAY YOUR EYES ON OUR GOODS, YOU HAVE DONE YOUR PART, AS WELL. YOU WILL ALSO BECOME AN ACCOMPLICE.
BRING IT ON.
NOW, WHAT KIND OF BEAUTIFUL WOMAN WILL HE HAVE ME TAKE?
OR DOES HE REALLY HAVE A TURTLE OR INSECT THAT VIOLATES THE C.I.T.E.S. LIST?
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO LOOK AS MUCH AS YOU'D LIKE.
DEAR CUSTOMERS
HMPH! HE WAS HOLDING BACK.
FOLLOW ME.
Gulp!
SO HE'S FINALLY GIVEN IN.
WAS THE 13TH FLOOR THIS WIDE?
...?!

HERE IT IS.
OKAY.
FEEL FREE, TAIZUU.
PLEASE TAKE A LOOK.
DAMN STRAIGHT.
TAIZUU?
IS-IS THAT THE REAL THING?!
YES, OF COURSE.
WH-WH-WHAT WAS THAT JUST NOW?!
IF YOU SHUT THE DOOR TOO ROUGHLY, YOU'LL SURPRISE HER.
THERE, THERE. IT'S ALL RIGHT. IT'S ALL RIGHT.

LOOK!
SIX MONTHS OLD. THEY'RE CUTEST WHEN THEY'RE BABIES.
RIGHT NOW SHE IS STILL DRINKING MILK, BUT...
...IN JUST ANOTHER HALF YEAR SHE'LL BE AROUND 80 KILOGRAMS.
SHE'LL NEED A CAGE OVER 100 SQUARE METERS AND...
...AS LONG AS YOU GIVE HER 30 KILOS OF BAMBOO A DAY .
...THE REST OF HER CARE IS PRETTY SIMPLE.
PUTTING THAT ASIDE!!
THIS CREATES AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM BETWEEN JAPAN AND CHINA!!
DIDN'T I TELL YOU PREVI-OUSLY?

TO BE FLUSTERED ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THIS IS EMBARRASSING FOR SOMEONE SUCH AS YOU, TAIZUU.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
IN ORDER TO KEEP A RARE SPECIES, YOU HAVE TO BE PREPARED TO BECOME AN ACCOMPLICE IN A SECRET.
THAT'S ENOUGH!!
STOMP! STOMP!
KA-CHUNK!
AH! TAIZUU?!
OH.
IF YOU DON'T LIKE THIS CHILD...
...HOW ABOUT THAT CHILD?
HE IS A VERY BEAUTIFUL MALE.
HE WAS THOUGHT TO BE EXTINCT IN AUSTRALIA 60 YEARS AGO--

I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING!
I DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING OR HEAR ANYTHING!!
THAT KIND OF PREPARATION IS VERY IMPORTANT.
THIS SHOP HAS ANCIENT AS WELL AS NEW SPECIES FROM BOTH THE EAST AND THE WEST. POPULAR ONES AS WELL AS RARE...
WE HAVE ALL DIFFERENT KINDS OF SPECIES.
I TOLD YOU DIDN'T I?
THIS MAN IS DANGEROUS.
THIS IS WORSE THAN PROSTITUTION OR SLAVERY...
THIS GUY WILL GET US ALL ARRESTED!
UM ...

WHAT KIND OF PET ARE YOU LOOKING FOR TODAY?
COULD YOU NOT FIND THE PET YOU SOUGHT?
UH...
I'M SORRY I HAD YOU WAITING SO LONG.
OH...
もじ
もじ
23
YES. YES. WHAT CAN I GET YOU?
YEAH... UM...
KAPPA... YOU SAID?
HUH?
WE WANT A KAPPA.
THIS KIND!
HERE!
の飼育法

IT IS A FICTIONAL CREATURE THAT APPEARS IN OLD JAPANESE FOLKLORE.
CHIN?
A "KAPPA" IS A MONSTER THAT HAS A PLATE ON ITS HEAD AND LIVES IN RIVERS.
IN ACTUALITY, ISN'T IT JUST THAT THIS KAPPA DOESN'T REALLY EXIST ANYWHERE?
...CREATURE...?
FICTIONAL...
BOOK?
LET ME SEE.
BUT THIS BOOK EXPLAINS HOW TO RAISE A KAPPA IN DETAIL!
IT'S NOT IN THE CHINESE MAN'S PET SHOP, EITHER.
SEE, BIG SIS. WE WENT TO ALL DIFFERENT KINDS OF PET SHOPS, BUT NO ONE HAS IT.

BOOK: How to Raise a Kappa

I SEE. I UNDERSTAND.
WILL YOU GIVE ME A LITTLE TIME?
I'M SURE THAT I CAN FIND A KAPPA FOR YOU WITHIN A WEEK OR TWO.
REALLY?!
WE'LL BE WAITING FOR YOUR PHONE CALL!
SEE YOU!
HEY, HEY. IS THAT OKAY?! SAYING THINGS LIKE THAT?
THE KAPPA IS A CREATURE THAT ONLY EXISTS IN FOLKLORE, RIGHT?

I WILL FIND THIS KAPPA EVEN IF IT MEANS PUTTING THE ENTIRE SHOP AT STAKE!
BE QUIET!!
Huh ?
Mmf
IT SHOWS THAT I AM STILL A NOVICE.
Mmf.
TO THINK THAT THERE WAS STILL A PET THAT COUNT D DIDN'T KNOW...
YES. YES, EVERYONE!!
PLEASE LEAVE IT TO ME!
HISS!
ARF!
BAH! BAH!
IF FOLKLORE ANIMALS DIDN'T EXIST, WHAT PLACE IN THE WORLD DO WE HAVE?!

COUNT D ALWAYS HAS SUCH A CALM DEMEANOR...
I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW PASSIONATE HE'S GETTING.
CAN I ASK...
...WHY YOU ARE COMING ALONG, TAIZUU?
NO PARTICULAR REASON.
...THIS IS MY CHANCE TO CATCH HIM DOING SOMETHING ILLEGAL.
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER KAPPAS EXIST OR NOT...
SO WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
I BELIEVE IT IS WISE TO ASK THE JAPANESE ABOUT SOMETHING FROM JAPAN.
TO GET INFORMATION ABOUT THIS ANIMAL.
I SEE.

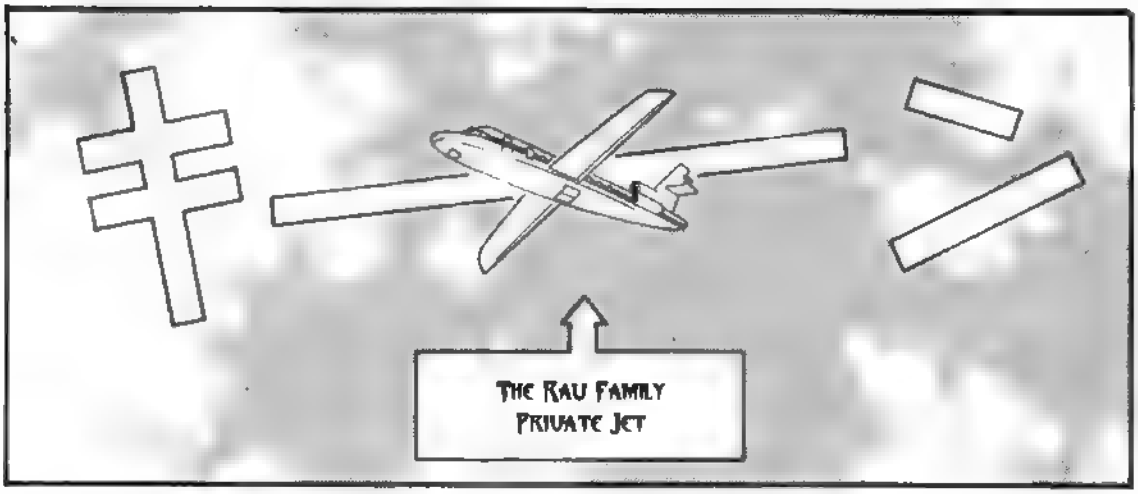
FOR HIM TO BE GOING OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY WITHOUT A CAR...
UNDERSTOOD
IT'S A GOOD CHANCE. LET'S FOLLOW HIM.
HEY!
IS THAT WOO-FEI RAU?
YEAH. NO MISTAKE.

KAPPA?!

K-KAPPA'S ARE
..PRIZED FOR THEIR MEAT!
I-I CAN EAT IT!!
N-NO, I AM--
WHY DON'T YOU TRY IT, COUNT D?
The Chinese can eat anything with four legs, other than the table itself!
OH, THAT IS VERY REFRESHING AND DELICIOUS!
RIGHT, HERE YOU GO!!
AH! THE CUCUMBER IS A KAPPA'S FAVORITE FOOD.
OF COURSE YOU CAN'T EAT THE ACTUAL KAPPA!!
THAT IS WHY A CUCUMBER ROLL IS CALLED A KAPPA ROLL.
I see I see
THIS IS STUPID.
Also, for the vegetarian Count D, I suggest a kampyo roll
OH. THIS IS...JUST CUCUMBER!

TAIZUU, YOU HAVEN'T TRIED SUSHI SINCE YOU CAME TO JAPAN?
NO. I WAS TAKEN TO A HIGH-CLASS SUSHI RESTAURANT BY A JAPANESE BUYER, BUT...
...AT THE TIME, THERE WAS NO COUNTER AND...
...THERE WEREN'T ANY SIGNS THAT SHOWED PRICES
OH, MY! DOES THIS COMMONER'S SUSHI NOT MEET THIS MAN'S HIGH STANDARDS?
ALL RIGHT!
CHEF! GIVE HIM THAT!!
MY TREAT.
NOW, NOW! EAT IT ALL IN ONE BITE!!
Open wide!
GREEN PASTE?
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A REAL KAPPA?!
YOU GUYS ARE NUTS! THEY DON'T REALLY EXIST!
Bwa ha ha ha!
S-SEE, LOOK. AS EXPECTED...
...THERE IS NO SUCH ANIMAL.
Kaff! Kaff!
NO!
WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I SAW A KAPPA BEFORE.
Taizuu!
HA HA! THE SPECIAL WASABI ROLL!!

...SAID THAT WHEN HE WAS A KID, HE OFTEN PLAYED WITH KAPPA.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, MY OLD MAN...
NO WAY! IT WAS JUST A CRAMP IN YOUR ANKLE!
HUH?
WHEN I WAS PLAYING IN A RIVER IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, MY LEG WAS GRABBED BY A KAPPA AND I ALMOST DROWNED.
THEY OFTEN STEAL FISHING BAIT.
If yer into fairytale animals, that is!
THEY SAY THAT FEMALE KAPPA ARE PRETTY SEXY.
KAPPAS LIKE SAKE A LOT, TOO. OR SO I'VE HEARD.
IN MY HOMETOWN, WE HAVE A PUBLIC BATH CALLED THE "KAPPA'S HOTSPRING."
A PICTURE OF A KAPPA OR ITS SKELETON, MAYBE?
HEY, HEY!! ISN'T THERE ANY SOLID EVIDENCE OR ANYTHING?!
AS EXPECTED!! THE KAPPA EXISTS!!
UGH!
Now that you mention it. I haven't seen that commercial recently.
THE MUMMY OF A KAPPA.
AH... I THINK THERE WAS SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN MY WIFE'S HOMETOWN.

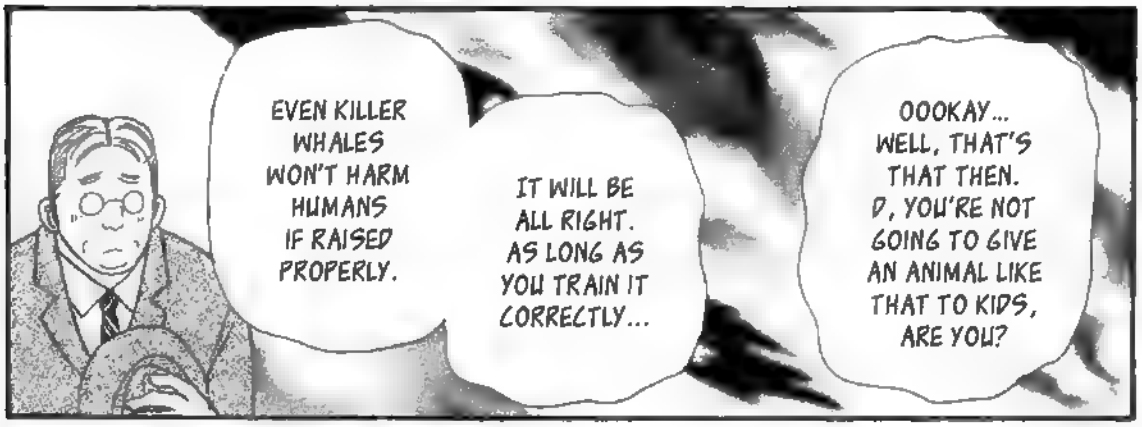

THE RAU FAMILY PRIVATE JET

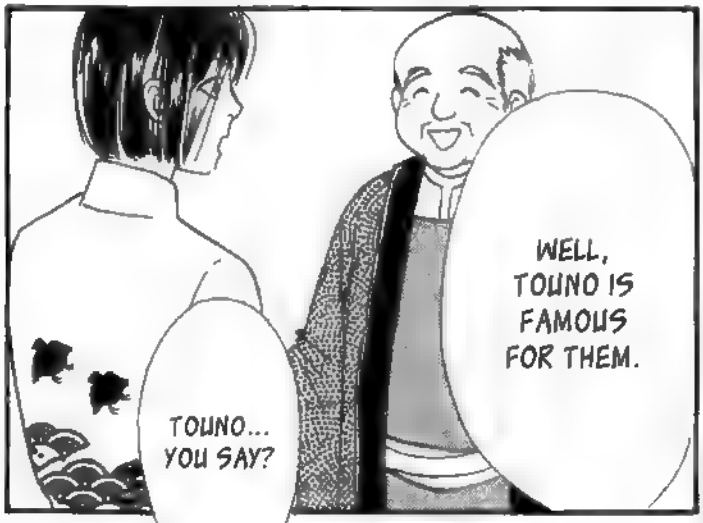
YES, OVER HERE.
THIS IS THE MUMMY OF A KAPPA THAT HAS BEEN PASSED DOWN THROUGH GENERATIONS.

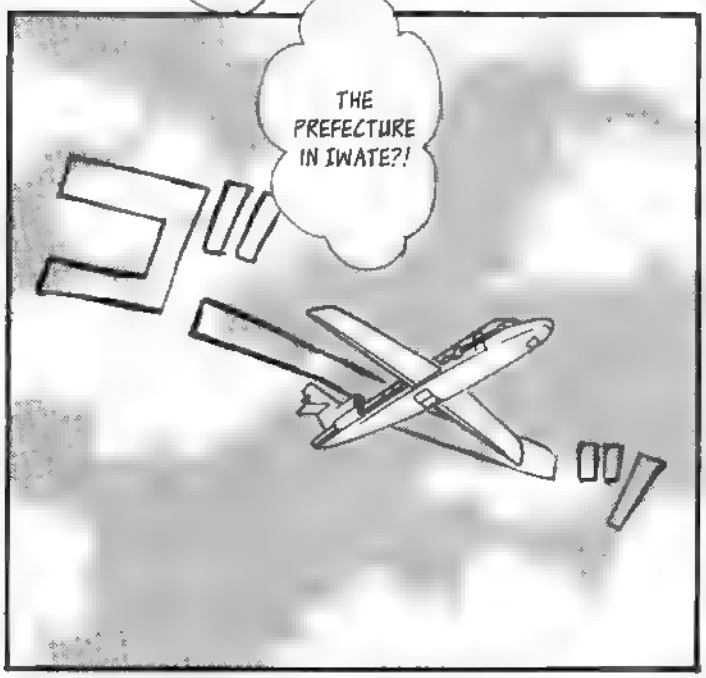
SAGA PREFECTURE
I SEE...
COMING ALL THE WAY FROM TOKYO.
I SEE. I SEE.

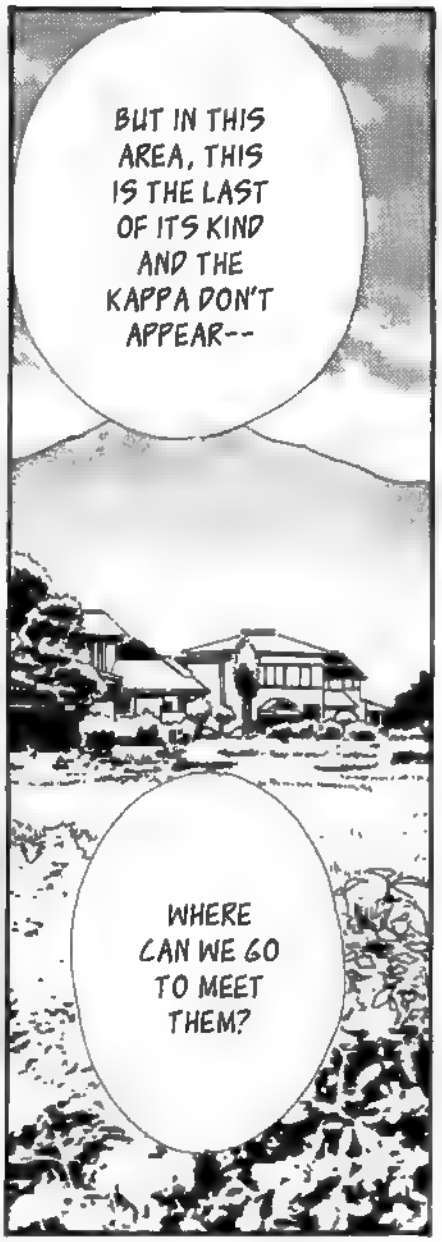
GEH!

YEESH... IT LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING A CAT HACKED UP AND THEN SET FIRE TO
TH-THIS IS A REAL KAPPA?!
SHIRIKO-WHAT?
IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL, THEY'LL STEAL YOUR SHIRIKODAMA.
...AND PULL OUT THEIR INNARDS TO EAT THEM.
IT MEANS THEY STICK THEIR HANDS UP THE BUTTS OF THE PEOPLE WHO DIED FROM DROWNING IN THE RIVER..
YOU SURE THIS ISN'T A MONKEY'S HEAD ATTACHED TO A KANGAROO'S BODY OR SOMETHING?
IS THIS THE REAL THING?
HO! HO! HO!
BECAUSE OF ITS APPEARANCE IN CHILDREN'S TOYS AND ANIME, THE KAPPA IS PORTRAYED AS SOMETHING CUTE, BUT...
...IN ACTUALITY, THE KAPPA IS A VERY SCARY CREATURE.


EVEN KILLER WHALES WON'T HARM HUMANS IF RAISED PROPERLY.
IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT. AS LONG AS YOU TRAIN IT CORRECTLY...
OOOKAY... WELL, THAT'S THAT THEN. D, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GIVE AN ANIMAL LIKE THAT TO KIDS, ARE YOU?

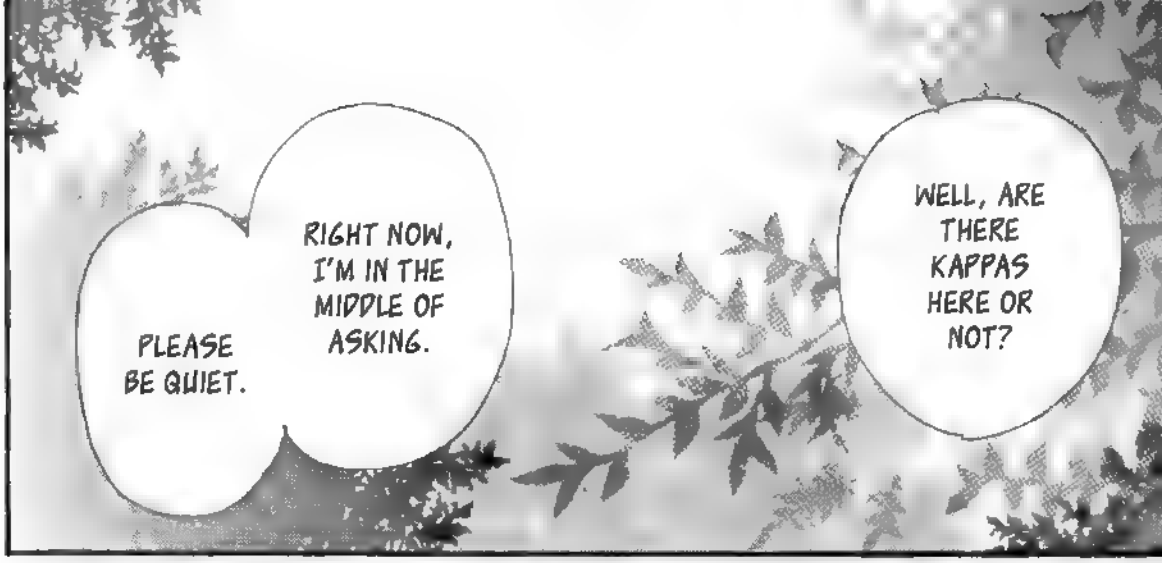

WELL, TOUNO IS FAMOUS FOR THEM.
TOUNO... YOU SAY?


THE PREFECTURE IN IWATE?!


BUT IN THIS AREA, THIS IS THE LAST OF ITS KIND AND THE KAPPA DON'T APPEAR--
WHERE CAN WE GO TO MEET THEM?

TOUNO: KAPPA RIVER
THIS PLACE LOOKS LIKE A PLACE THAT A KAPPA WOULD LIVE.
WELL, WELL...
SHH!
YOU THINK SO? IT FEELS LIKE A TOURIST TRAP TO ME.

PEEP! PEEP! PEEP!
CHI! CHI! CHI!
FHWEEEE!
CHIK! CHIK! CHIK!
TWEEET!
CAW! CAW!
KYIIH! KYIIH! KYIIH!
CROAK! CROAK!
ケ
ケ


WELL, ARE THERE KAPPAS HERE OR NOT?
RIGHT NOW, I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF ASKING.
PLEASE BE QUIET.

WELL, ANYWAYS...

HMPH!

ARE YOU FEELING NOSTALGIC ABOUT YOUR HOME COUNTRY?
I'M SURPRISED THAT JAPAN STILL HAS PLACES LIKE THIS.
I'VE BEEN LIVING IN CROWDED SHINJUKU ALL THIS TIME AND DIDN'T NOTICE.

NOW, THE SHANGHAI AREA IS COVERED IN TALL BUILDINGS, BUT...
...IF YOU GO TO THE OUTSKIRTS, THERE ARE STILL PEACEFUL PLACES, CORRECT?
YES.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
NOTHING. IS THERE SOMETHING THE MATTER?
WE'RE GOING BACK, CHIN.
THIS WAS A WASTE OF OUR TIME.
YES, TAIZUU.
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO TELL THOSE CHILDREN THAT KAPPA ARE FIGMENTS OF THE IMAGINATION AFTER ALL.
TAIZUU ...
PLEASE WAIT A MOMENT.
WHY DO YOU DECIDE SO QUICKLY THAT CREATURES IN FOLKLORE DO NOT EXIST?

THE THINGS YOU SEE RIGHT NOW AREN'T THE ONLY THINGS IN THE WORLD, YOU KNOW.
THE CREATURES THAT HAVE BEEN PASSED DOWN IN HUMAN FOLKLORE...
...MUST HAVE ORIGINATED FROM SOMEWHERE.
HOW STUPID !!
EVEN THOUGH THAT WORKS IN SMALL COMPANIES IN ASIA...
IT WILL ONLY PREVENT THEM FROM STANDING SHOULDER TO SHOULDER WITH THE BIGGER COMPANIES OF THE WEST!!
THINGS LIKE SUSPICIOUS ANIMALS AND FENG-SHUI. SPEAKING DESPERATELY ABOUT LUCK IS OLD MEN'S NONSENSE!
WHAT YOU NEED ARE POWER AND MONEY!

THAT'S ALL I BELIEVE IN!
.....
.....
Huff

A PET THAT COUNT D CAN OBTAIN FOR YOU...
TAIZUU...
FINALLY, YOU TOO.
IT LOOKS LIKE I'LL BE ABLE TO FIND SOMETHING...

WHEN WE RETURN TO THE SHOP, LET'S TALK IT OVER--
A PET...?!
I DON'T NEED ANYTHING LIKE THAT!!
WELL, DON'T SAY THINGS LIKE THAT...

BANG!
TAIZUU?!
DID WE DO IT?!

I THOUGHT SOMETHING LIKE THIS MIGHT HAPPEN.
TAIZUU?!
THAT'S WHY I ALWAYS WEAR A BULLET-PROOF VEST!
TAI...
BANG!
GET DOWN!!
SHIT!
WE MESSED UP!!
WHO KNOWS...? MAYBE FROM THE TAIWANESE MAFIA OR...
...THE JAPANESE MAFIA.
BANG!
JUST WHO ARE THOSE PEOPLE?!
SHOOT! SHOOT--!!

THERE ARE SO MANY POSSIBILITIES THAT I REALLY DON'T KNOW.
OR IT COULD BE MEMBERS OF MY OWN GROUP THAT ARE AFTER MY POSITION.
BANG!
BANG!
YEAH!
TAIZUU, TAKE THIS.
CHIN! TAKE COUNT D AND GET AWAY!
YES!
BANG!
BANG!
SHIT!
SHOOT! KILL THEM ALL!

COUNT?!

?!
ゴゴゴゴゴ
ゴゴゴゴゴ

WHO IS MAKING SO MUCH RACKET AT MY RIVERBANK?!
DRAGON GOD...?!
IS THAT COUNT D?
MASTER SHII-EN?!

IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME. I HOPE YOU ARE WELL.
OH MY! HAVE YOU BEEN HEALTHY, AS WELL?
.....
OF COURSE!
DOES THE MASTER KNOW ABOUT THE KAPPA?
WHAT ARE YOU SEARCHING FOR THAT BRINGS YOU HERE?
OH...!! THEN KAPPA REALLY DO EXIST.

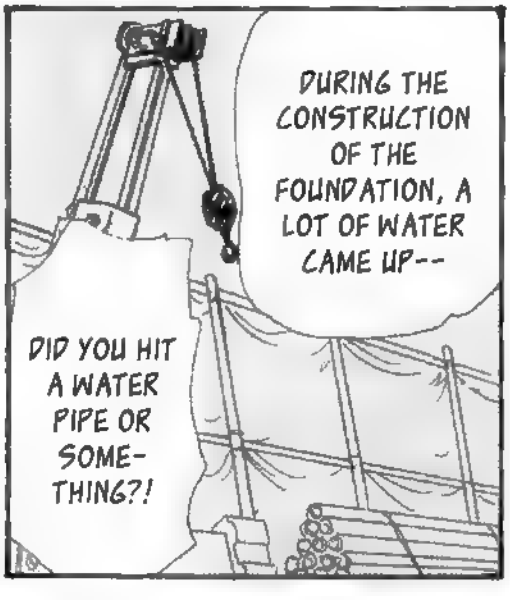
I DO NOT KNOW WHERE HE HAS WANDERED OFF TO.
IS THAT SO...?
YES! BUT LATELY, I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM AROUND HERE.
LAST YEAR, DURING A GREAT RAINSTORM, THE RIVER OVERFLOWED AND HE WAS PUSHED DOWN TOWARD THE RIVER'S MOUTH. I HAVE NOT SEEN HIM SINCE.
...NO.
I APOLOGIZE FOR NOT BEING ABLE TO HELP.
I WAS ABLE TO MEET THE MASTER AGAIN, AS WELL--
.....
YES. IF YOU NEED ANYTHING ELSE, DO NOT HESITATE TO ASK!
IT IS ENOUGH.
AS LONG AS I KNOW THAT THE KAPPA WAS HERE...

THEN, UNTIL NEXT TIME...!

AND HE'S ALSO OLD FRIENDS WITH A DRAGON GOD...
HE SECRETLY SELLS A PANDA THAT IS ON THE W LIST...
DANGEROUS. HE'S TOO DANGEROUS.
I HAVE TO GET HIM OUT OF MY BUILDING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!
N-NO, I'LL BE FINE.
THIS... THIS GUY...
SIIIIIGH...
I WONDER HOW I SHOULD APOLOGIZE TO THE LITTLE CLIENTS.
GOOD JOB TODAY AS WELL, TAIZUU.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE SOME TEA AT MY SHOP?

WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
THERE'S TROUBLE AT THE EMPTY LOT THAT WE BOUGHT UP A FEW DAYS AGO ON 3RD STREET!
AH! TAIZUU, WHAT PERFECT TIMING.

AN UNDER-GROUND WATER VEIN?!
NO, IT'S JUST-- IT SEEMS THAT THERE IS AN UNDERGROUND WATER VEIN BELOW AND WE ACCIDENTALLY DUG INTO IT.


DID YOU HIT A WATER PIPE OR SOME-THING?!
DURING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FOUNDATION, A LOT OF WATER CAME UP--

THERE ARE A LOT OF UNKNOWN UNDERGROUND WATER VEINS RUNNING THROUGHOUT TOKYO...
NO, IT DOESN'T SEEM THAT THE MAKE-UP OF THE WATER IS THAT OF A HOT SPRING.
IT WOULD BE WONDERFUL IF IT WAS A HOT SPRING. SHINJUKU WOULD HAVE ANOTHER FAMOUS PLACE!

WHAT'S WRONG?!
AH! TAIZUU.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
IT LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE FELL INTO THE HOLE.
HEEEEEY! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
HOLD ON TIGHT!
GOOD! JUST A BIT MORE...!
YOU CAN DO IT!
TIE YOUR HAND AROUND THE ROPE!
THAT'S RIGHT! DON'T LET GO...
DID YOU CALL A RESCUE TEAM?!
HERE HE COMES!

Kyuuuu!

.....
HAPPINESS ALWAYS TENDS TO BE NEARBY, DOESN'T IT? ♡
THAT'S A KAPPA?
IT'S A KAPPA
OH! A KAPPA

STORY 5 END

第6話／Da capo

SO YOU ARE SURE THAT NO CLOSE RELATIVES WILL BE ABLE TO JOIN YOU?
Y-YES.
THEN I WILL TELL YOU THIS DIRECTLY.
YOU HAVE...
...CANCER.

LUCKILY, IT IS STILL IN ITS EARLY STAGES. IF WE PERFORM SURGERY QUICKLY, YOU SHOULD BE FINE.
THE SOONER, THE BETTER. IF YOU CAN COME IN THIS WEEKEND, WE CAN HURRY AND DO THE SURGERY.
LET'S DISCUSS HEALTH INSURANCE...
ALSO, YOU AND ONE OTHER PERSON WILL HAVE TO COME TO SIGN A SURGERY AGREEMENT--
WAIT...! WAIT A MOMENT.
PLEASE.
WHAT'S WRONG? EVEN THOUGH IT'S IN ITS EARLY STAGES, YOU'RE YOUNG. THE CANCER SPREADS IN YOU THAT MUCH FASTER.
.....

EVEN MY FAMILY REGISTER...

EVEN IF I HAD IT, IT WOULD BE AT THE SMALL FISHING TOWN ON THAT LITTLE ISLAND.

Japanese people have their name in a family register, to keep track of family lines

WHAT SHOULD I DO? NOT ONLY HEALTH INSURANCE, BUT I HAVEN'T PAID INTO ANY PENSION PROGRAMS.

UMM...CAN YOU LET ME THINK IT OVER A BIT...?

IT'S BEEN ALMOST 10 YEARS SINCE I DROPPED OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL AND CAME TO THE CAPITAL AGAINST MY PARENT'S WISHES.

RIGHT NOW, I'M LIVING WITH MY BOYFRIEND OF SIX MONTHS, YUUKI-KUN.

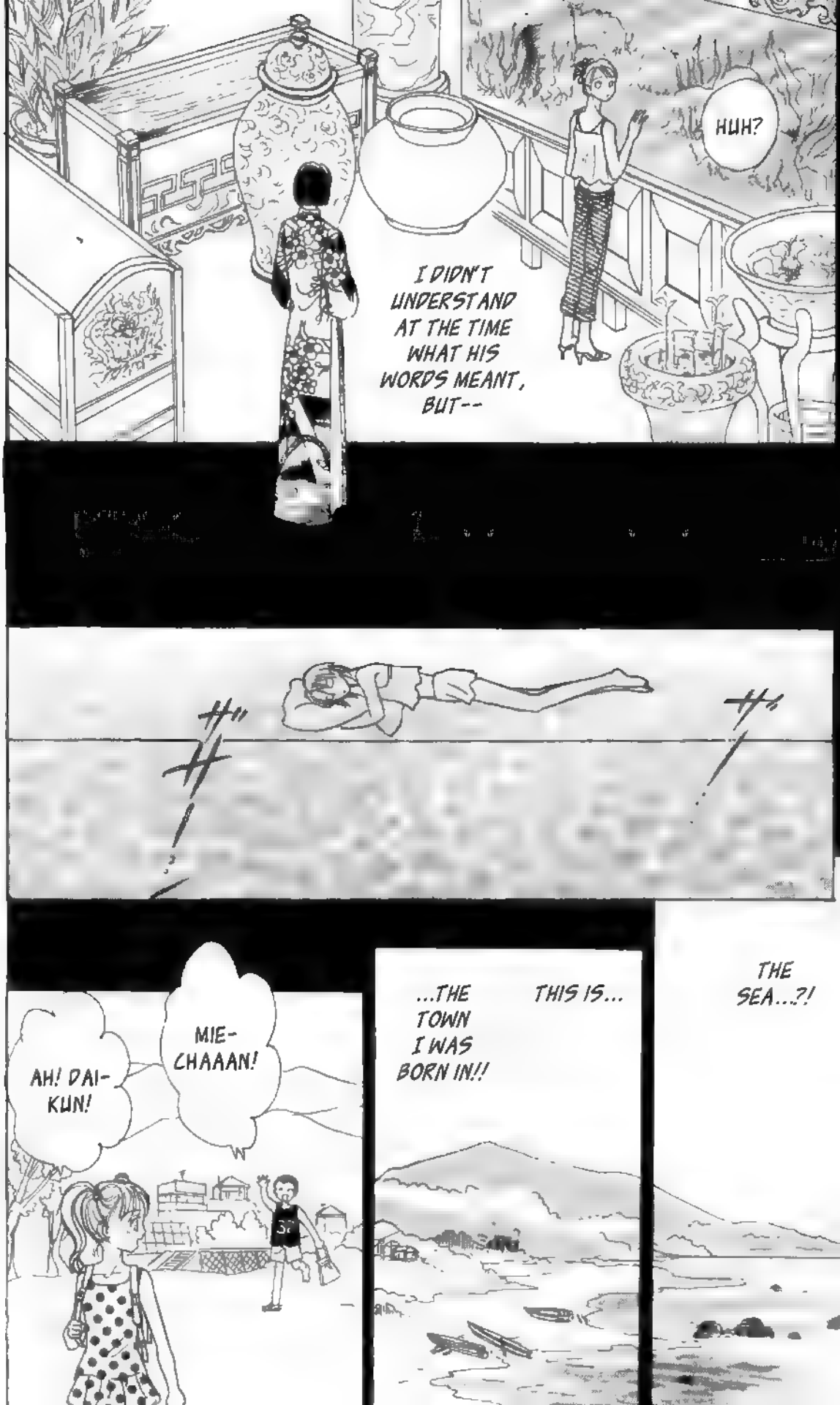
EVEN IF I DON'T HAVE ANY INSURANCE, I DO HAVE ENOUGH SAVED UP TO AFFORD THE SURGERY SOMEHOW...

SINCE I'VE COME HERE, I'VE BEEN MOVING AROUND AND LIVING WITH FRIENDS OR MEN WHO HIT ON ME.

WITHOUT KNOWING MY IDENTITY LIKE THIS?!
THEN, WILL I "DIE"?!
IT'S JUST... I'M NOT 100% SURE THAT I'LL BE CURED.
THEN...
?...
NO CHILDREN TO LEAVE BEHIND...
I STILL HAVEN'T ACHIEVED ANY OF MY DREAMS.
...HOW DID THAT CHINESE PET SHOP OWNER...?!
NOW THAT I THINK OF IT...

UWAAAH! IT LOOKS SO CREEPY!
WHAT'S WITH THIS GOLDFISH? IS IT SICK?!
THAT IS A TYPE OF SPECIES KNOW AS THE DUTCH BLECHNACEAE.
IT IS TRUE THAT IT ORIGINALLY LOOKED LIKE A NORMAL GOLDFISH, BUT BECAUSE OF SUDDEN CHANGES...
IT HAS BEEN VERY POPULAR IN CHINA FOR MANY GENERATIONS AND WAS EVEN RAISED IN THE CAPITAL!
THE GREATER THE TUMOR GROWTHS, THE MORE VALUABLE AND BEAUTIFUL THEY WERE THOUGHT TO BE.

I WOULD MUCH RATHER HAVE A PRETTY FISH, LIKE AN ANGEL FISH OR A NEON TETRA FISH...
BLEEH! THAT'S SO CREEPY!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW SOMETHING LIKE THIS CAN COST $1,000!
AREN'T YOU ALREADY...
...RAISING A SIMILAR CRAB IN YOUR STOMACH?
WHERE CAN I GET SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
...AND I'D LIKE SOMETHING THAT ISN'T A LOT OF TROUBLE TO TAKE CARE OF.
HM?
WELL, I MUST SAY, DEAR CUSTOMER...


HUH?
I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND AT THE TIME WHAT HIS WORDS MEANT, BUT--
THE SEA...?!
THIS IS...
...THE TOWN I WAS BORN IN!!
MIE-CHAAAN!
AH! DAI-KUN!

THIS IS THE SAME ONE THAT AMURO-CHAN WAS WEARING ON TV!
WOW!! THANK YOU.
32
I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU, MIE-CHAN.
THIS IS SOMETHING THAT MY BIG SISTER BOUGHT FOR ME WHEN SHE WENT TO WORK ON THE MAINLAND.
OH, MY! IT LOOKS GOOD ON YOU, MIE-CHAN.
MIE-CHAN IS REALLY CUTE.
WHEN SHE GROWS UP, SHE'LL BE A BEAUTY!
GOODNESS, I WONDER WHO SHE GOT IT FROM.
SHE JUST WATCHES THE TELEVISION ALL DAY, IT'S SUCH A PROBLEM.
GRANNY, I GOT SOME CRABS!!
OH, MY! THIS IS A FIDDLER CRAB! QUICKLY, RETURN IT TO THE OCEAN.
WE CAN'T EAT THEM?
IS IT BAD LUCK?
THEY SAY THAT THE FIDDLER CRAB IS AN ANIMAL THAT CAUSES DEATH, AND SO...
...THE PEOPLE IN THE VILLAGE HAVE NEVER EATEN THEM.
OH, GRANNY. THAT'S JUST A SUPERSTITION.

BRINGS DEATH...
Ah!
NOW... THAT YOU MENTION IT... CRAB...
Huff...
HUH?
IS THE ASTRO-LOGICAL SIGN FOR CANCER
CANCER!

...AH!
CHAN
MIE-CHAN, DON'T SIT AROUND WITH SUCH A FACE. SMILE MORE, SMILE!
MIE-CHAN?
IF YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO, GO HELP ASUKA-SAN OR SOMETHING.
IT'S HARD TO GET PEOPLE TO REQUEST YOU BECAUSE YOU ACT LIKE THAT.
THAT CHINESE PET SHOP OWNER...
DRUNKEN MIDDLE-AGED MEN...
...AND THE WOMEN WHO SELL THEIR CHARM TO THEM.
I'M NOT LIKE YOU PEOPLE.
Y-YES.
HOW STUPID.
DID HE KNOW THAT I HAD A DISEASE?
...I WANT MORE...
RIGHT NOW, I'M DOING THIS KIND OF THING IN ORDER TO SURVIVE, BUT...
A BRIGHTLY LIT STAGE!

OKAY, STOP THERE!
GOOD WORK.
THE REST CAN GO HOME.
NUMBERS 11 AND 17...ALSO, NUMBER 25, STAY BEHIND AS WELL.
NUMBER THREE AND NUMBER FIVE.
I WON'T EVEN BE USED AS A BACK-UP DANCER, MUCH LESS A LEAD.
THAT GIRL IS YOUNGER THAN ME...
...WELL, A WOMAN PAST 20 ISN'T IDOL MATERIAL, I GUESS.
AGAIN. I COULDN'T DO IT...

I WANTED TO SEE A BIGGER WORLD.
I WANTED SOMETHING DRAMATIC.
IT WAS A BEHIND-THE-TIMES TOWN WHERE ALL THE MEN WERE FISHERMEN AND WOMEN COULD ONLY GET JOBS AS SEA PEOPLE AS WELL.
I WAS CONSIDERED THE MOST BEAUTIFUL ON THE ISLAND!..
THE ATMOSPHERE IN TOWN WAS STIFLING. EVERYONE KNEW ME BY NAME.
I NEEDED THE EYES OF A BIGGER WORLD TO LOOK AT ME.
BUT...
...TOKYO DIDN'T NEED ME AT ALL...

WHAT...? THIS ROOM IS SO MESSY.
ON TOP OF THAT, YOU DIDN'T TURN ON THE AC AGAIN. IT'S SO HOT!!
Hic!
YUU-CHAN... YOU DRANK TOO MUCH AGAIN.
HEY...
YUU-CHAN!
URK!
S... SORRY.
UNLIKE YOU, WHO WAS BORN IN THE SOUTHERN ISLANDS, I'M DELICATE!!
LISTEN.
UM... YUU-CHAN...
I... YESTERDAY, I WENT TO THE HOSPITAL.
WILL YOU HAVE $3,000 BY TOMORROW?
OH, THAT'S RIGHT, MIE...

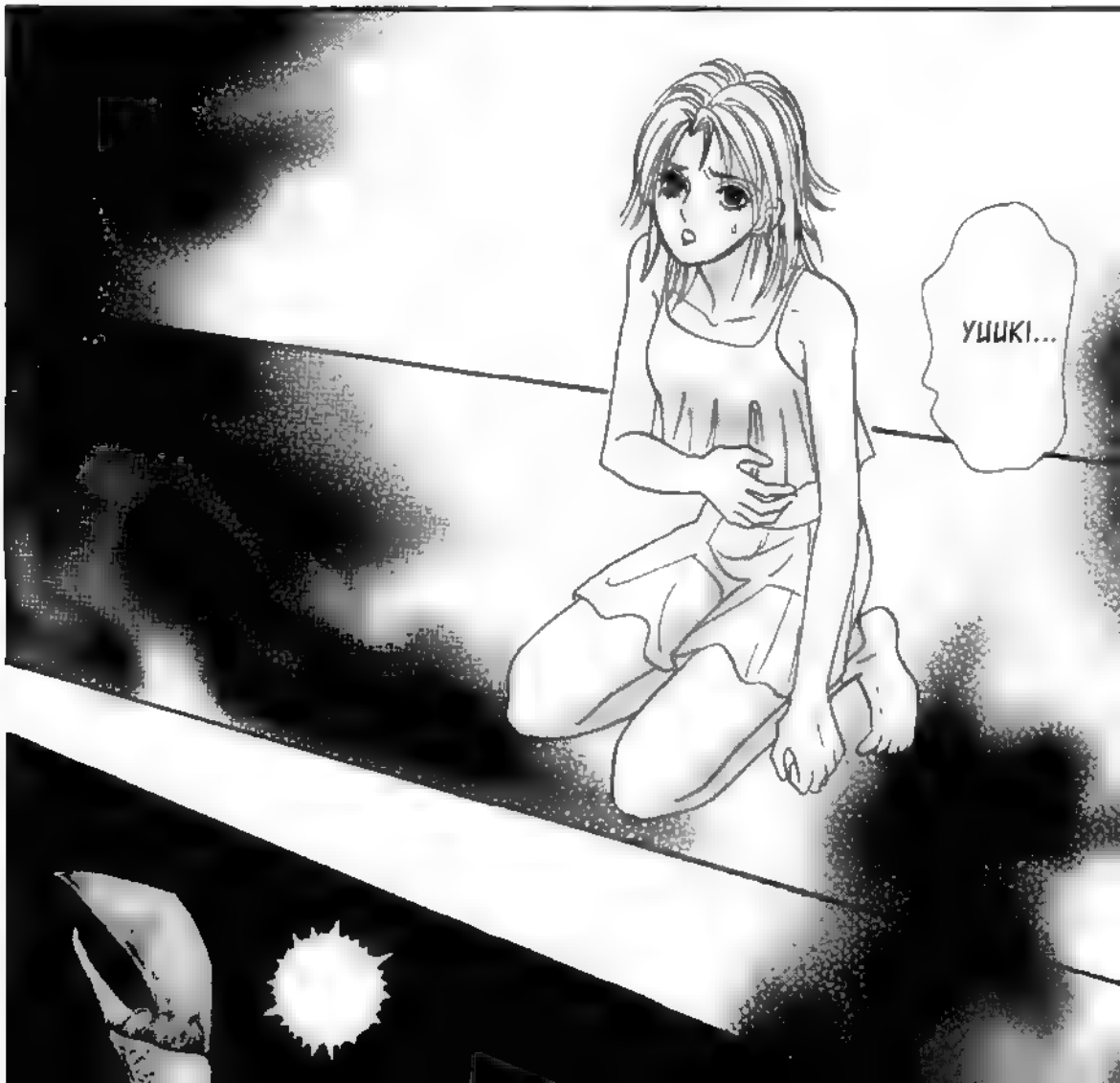
... HUH ?!
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO SAY SOMETHING LIKE YOU GOT A KID IN YOU, RIGHT?!
IT COULDN'T BE THAT YOU'RE--
HOS... PITAL?

YUU...!!
BESIDES, IT'S EVEN SUSPICIOUS WHETHER I'M THE REAL FATHER OR NOT.
DAMN

I'M NOT READY TO BE TIED DOWN BY A KID YET!
QUIT JOKING AROUND!

GET OUT OF HERE!!
AH JEEZ! YOU'RE SUCH A PAIN!!

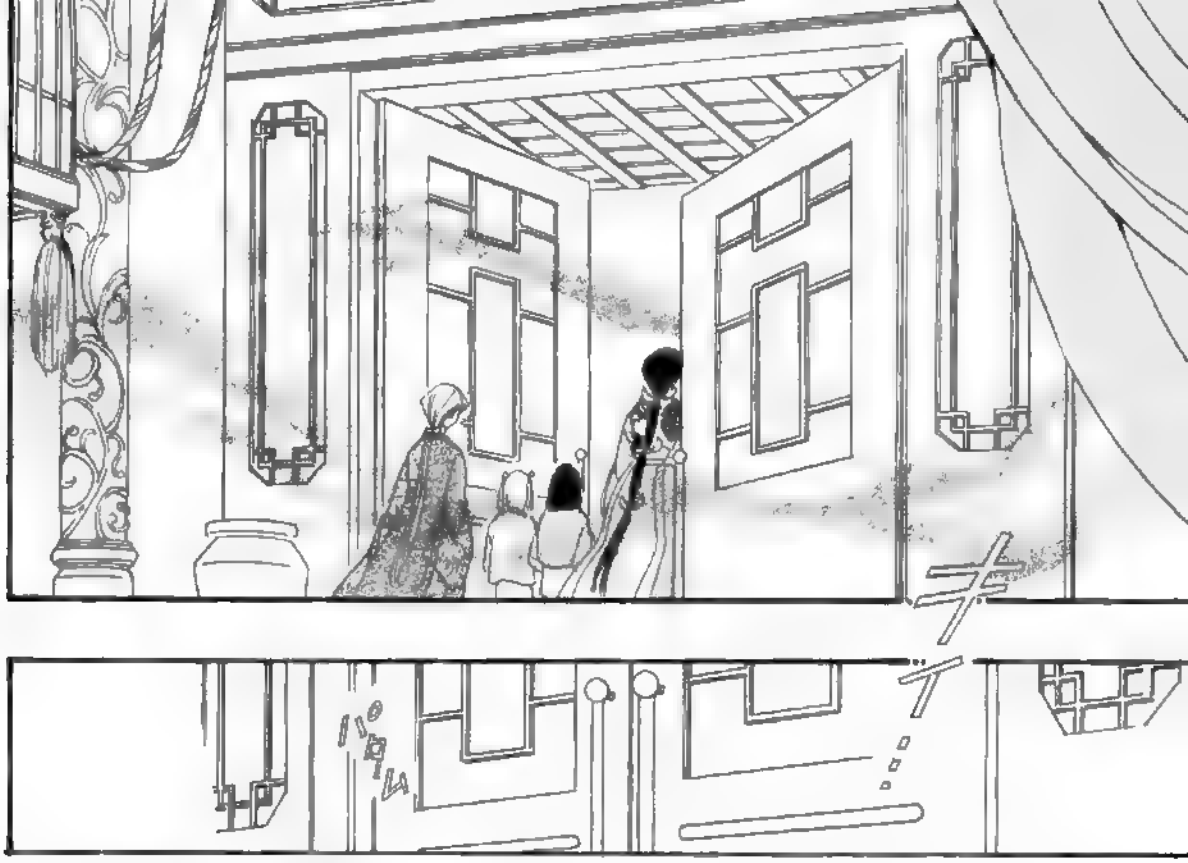
WHY DON'T YOU DECIDE ON YOUR OWN WHETHER YOU'RE GOING TO DROP IT OR KEEP IT!!
I'M SICK OF YOU!!
YUU-CHAN, THAT'S NOT IT! LISTEN...!!
SLAP
AH!


YUUKI...

COME HERE...
COME HERE...

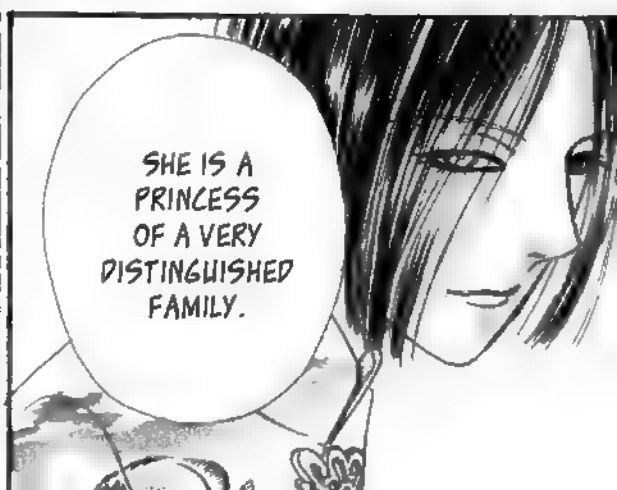
新中華街
NO MATTER HOW HOT IT IS OUTSIDE, ISN'T HE TURNING THE ON THE AC A BIT TOO HIGH?!
WHAT IS THIS? THIS ROOM...
JEEZ.
WHOA!
SOON, WE SHALL FREE UP YOUR TIME.
TAIZUU... BE QUIET!
COUNT... YOU BASTARD!

THEN, COUNT D... AT THE TIME OF THE EVENT I JUST SPOKE TO YOU OF...
I UNDERSTAND

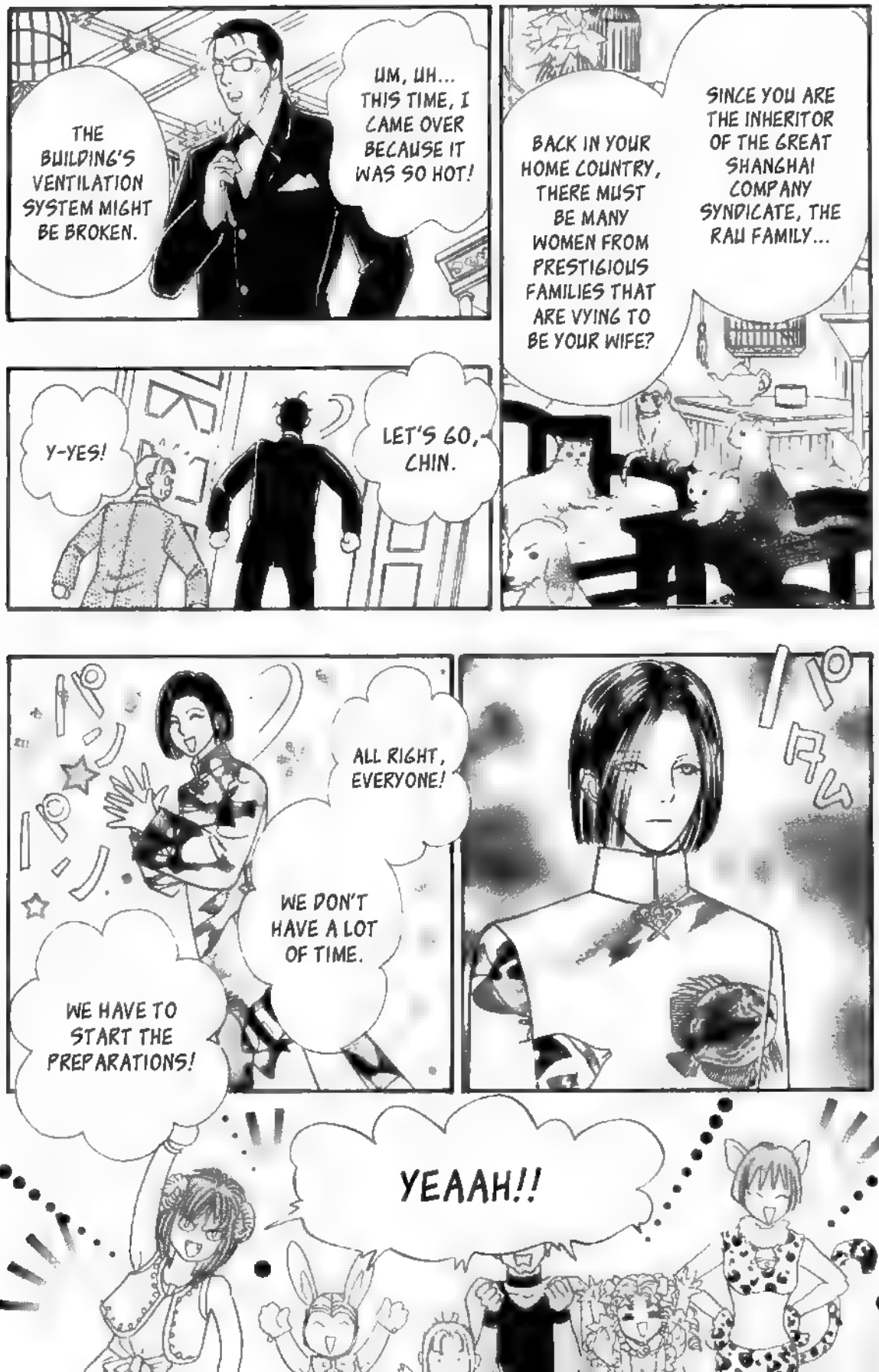


HMPH! SO, THEN...
...WHAT KIND OF REQUEST DID YOU TAKE ON THIS TIME?!
Specialty birds like vultures, again?
ANOTHER REQUEST FOR A FUNERAL?

IS THAT THE HEAD WIFE OF THE JAPANESE YAKUZA...
...OR A KABUKI PERFORMER?!
WHO WERE THOSE PEOPLE, JUST NOW?


SHE IS A PRINCESS OF A VERY DISTINGUISHED FAMILY.

DON'T SAY SUCH UNLUCKY THINGS.
THIS TIME, IT IS AN AUSPICIOUS OCCASION...
IT IS A MARRIAGE!!
OH...?
SO THE WOMAN THAT LEFT JUST NOW IS THE BRIDE?
IT LOOKS LIKE THE GROOM WILL BE WELL-BRED.
YES, BUT...
...THEY SAY THAT MARRIAGE IS THE GRAVEYARD OF LIFE.
YOU ARE PROBABLY NOT AS WRONG AS YOU MAY THINK.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, TAIZUU...
WILL YOU GET MARRIED?
Bfff!


THE BUILDING'S VENTILATION SYSTEM MIGHT BE BROKEN.
UM, UH... THIS TIME, I CAME OVER BECAUSE IT WAS SO HOT!
BACK IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY, THERE MUST BE MANY WOMEN FROM PRESTIGIOUS FAMILIES THAT ARE VYING TO BE YOUR WIFE?
SINCE YOU ARE THE INHERITOR OF THE GREAT SHANGHAI COMPANY SYNDICATE, THE RAU FAMILY...
Y-YES!
LET'S GO, CHIN.
ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE!
WE DON'T HAVE A LOT OF TIME.
WE HAVE TO START THE PREPARATIONS!
YEAAH!!

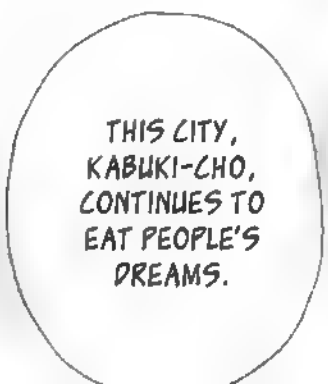
I'M SORRY, DEAR CUS-TOMER...
TODAY WE ARE CLO--
OH, MY...
YOU WERE YESTER-DAY'S--
I...
WHEN DID I COME HERE?
OH...!
THE "CRAB" THAT YOU ARE RAISING...
HE MUST HAVE SHOWN YOU THE WAY HERE.
AH!
THAT'S RIGHT!
AT THE TIME, HOW DID YOU KNOW--?!

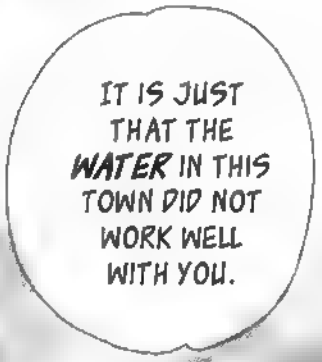
IF IT MADE YOU UNCOMFORTABLE, I APOLOGIZE.
...I WAS JUST TRYING TO GET YOU TO LEAVE QUICKLY.
THAT DAY, IT LOOKED LIKE YOU DIDN'T NEED A PET SO...

I DON'T HAVE...
A PLACE TO LIVE, EVEN A PLACE TO GO...

A PET...
I CAN'T TAKE CARE OF ONE, ANYMORE.

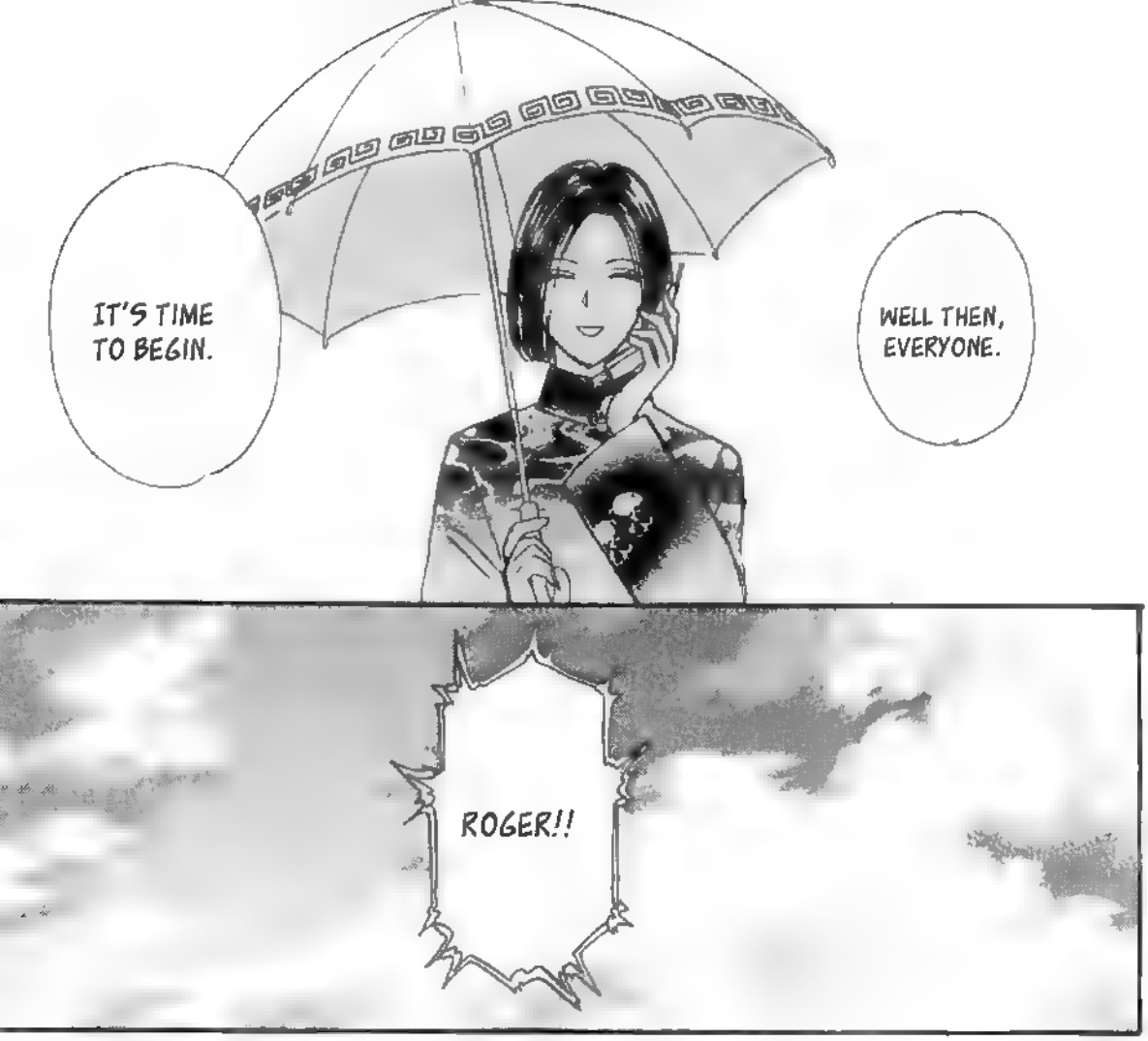
BUT NOW ...
I THINK I CAN GIVE YOU THE PET THAT YOU NEED.


THIS CITY, KABUKI-CHO, CONTINUES TO EAT PEOPLE'S DREAMS.


IT IS JUST THAT THE WATER IN THIS TOWN DID NOT WORK WELL WITH YOU.

YOU CAN STILL MAKE IT IN TIME...
...BEFORE YOU ARE COMPLETELY CONSUMED.

OH! IT LOOKS LIKE THE GROUP TO ROOT FOR IN KOSHIEN STADIUM IS KANTOUZEI BASEBALL TEAM!
HEY NOW! DON'T EAT TOO MUCH ICE-CREAM!
PHEW!
IT'S HOT TODAY, TOO!


IT'S TIME TO BEGIN.
WELL THEN, EVERYONE.
ROGER!!

COFFEE
IT LOOKS LIKE THERE'LL BE A STORM TONIGHT.
IF IT RAINS, IT'LL GET A BIT COOLER AND THAT WOULD BE A GREAT HELP.
ゴロ
RUMBLE
ゴロ
RUMBLE

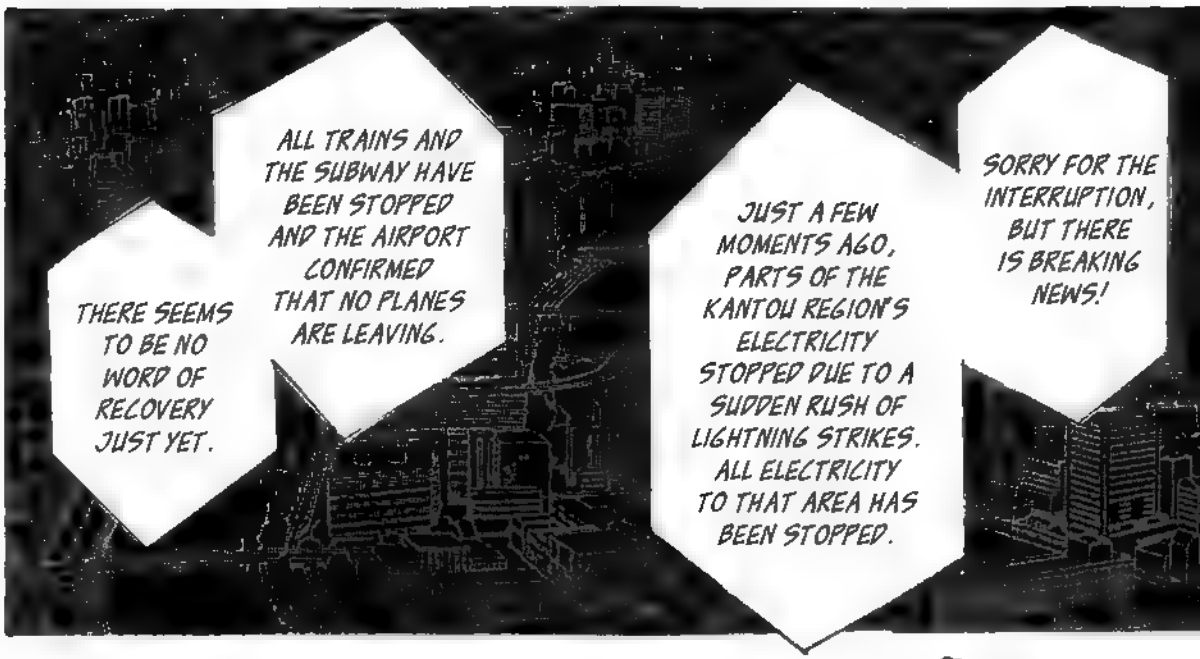
OH!
THE LIGHTS.
UGH!
KYAAAAH!

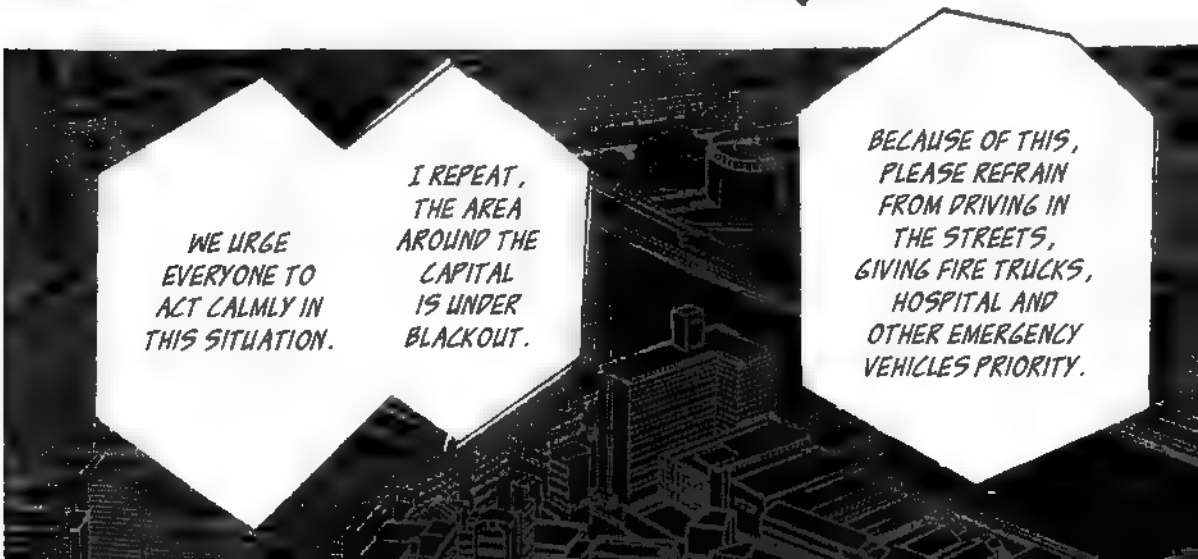
HEEY, WHAT'S GOING ON?!
CALM DOWN, SOMEONE WILL COME HELP RIGHT AWAY
WAAAH!
THE STOP-LIGHTS?!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, WE HAVE BACK-UP GENERATORS.
THE C-COMPUTER--
AURGGH!

ALL OF THE SEVEN PATHWAYS FOR ELECTRICITY ARE DOWN.
TH... THAT IS...
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
TRANSMISSION OF POWER HAS STOPPED TO THE XX AREA.
PART OF THE AA MAP HAS ALSO GONE DOWN.
POWER FAILURE IN AA AREA.
WE'LL BE ABLE TO BRING UP THE POWER RIGHT AWAY--!
PATHWAYS FOR ELECTRICITY ARE BACKED UP SEVEN DIFFERENT WAYS.
DON'T PANIC!
...N-NO. ACCORDING TO THE METEOR-OLOGICAL OFFICE...
COULD IT BE THE WORK OF TERRORISTS?!
TH... THAT CAN'T BE--!
REAL LIGHTNING HIT ALL SEVEN ELECTRICAL CONNECTIONS... THAT'S WHAT IT SEEMS LIKE.
IT'S LIGHTNING ...

SINCE THIS WAS A REQUEST FROM COUNT D, I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO HELP PERSONALLY.
OH, MY! MASTER RYUU-REI, LONG TIME NO SEE!
I FEEL MUCH BETTER AFTER BEING ABLE TO DISCHARGE. IT'S BEEN A WHILE.
SINCE THE EARTHQUAKE DISASTER IN THE KANTOU REGION, RIGHT?
ZZZZAAAAAA!
...THIS IS AN ACT OF TERRORISM.
WELL, IN ONE SENSE...

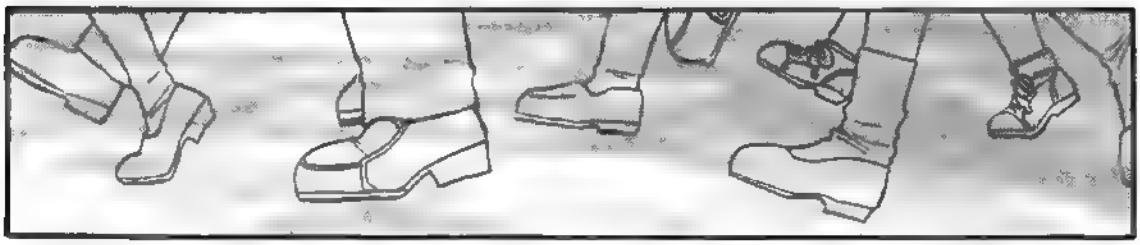
WE'RE ENTERING THE 7TH INNING STRETCH
HEY! IS THERE A RADIO?
THEY'RE STILL PLAYING IN KOSHIEN.
STUPID! TURN IT TO THE NEWS.
HELLO--?!
IS THE SERVER DOWN?
ARE YOU OKAY OVER THERE?
HELLO, IT'S ME
HUH? OUR HOUSE HAS NO ELECTRICITY?!
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
IT WON'T GO BACK ON!


THERE SEEMS TO BE NO WORD OF RECOVERY JUST YET.
ALL TRAINS AND THE SUBWAY HAVE BEEN STOPPED AND THE AIRPORT CONFIRMED THAT NO PLANES ARE LEAVING.
JUST A FEW MOMENTS AGO, PARTS OF THE KANTOU REGION'S ELECTRICITY STOPPED DUE TO A SUDDEN RUSH OF LIGHTNING STRIKES. ALL ELECTRICITY TO THAT AREA HAS BEEN STOPPED.
SORRY FOR THE INTERRUPTION, BUT THERE IS BREAKING NEWS!


WE URGE EVERYONE TO ACT CALMLY IN THIS SITUATION.
I REPEAT, THE AREA AROUND THE CAPITAL IS UNDER BLACKOUT.
BECAUSE OF THIS, PLEASE REFRAIN FROM DRIVING IN THE STREETS, GIVING FIRE TRUCKS, HOSPITAL AND OTHER EMERGENCY VEHICLES PRIORITY.

ARGH! ONE MONTH'S WORTH OF DATA, GONE.
WHY DON'T THE WINDOWS OPEN IN THIS BUILDING?!
SHIT! IT'S SO HOT!
YOU DIDN'T BACK IT UP?
WELL, WE'RE ON A HIGH FLOOR. I'M SURE THEY DIDN'T THINK OF THAT.
THE HOTELS ARE PROBABLY IN THE SAME SITUATION.
IT'S ALREADY SIX, WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
AND IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE WE CAN CATCH A TAXI...
BUT THE TRAINS AREN'T MOVING, RIGHT?
THE CLIENT IS IN THE SAME SITUATION, RELAX
THIS DOCUMENT NEEDS TO BE FINISHED BY TOMORROW!
HUH?!
BUT YOUR HOUSE IS IN YOKOHAMA, RIGHT?
THAT'S ABOUT 30 KM FROM HERE.
...I...I'M GOING HOME AFTER ALL.
...YEAH. IF WE SLEEP ONE EVENING INSTEAD OF WORKING, IT SHOULD COME BACK ON.
I GUESS THERE'S NO CHOICE. WE'LL STAY THE NIGHT HERE.

I THINK MY PARENTS ARE WORRIED ABOUT ME BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE A CELL PHONE.
I'M GOING HOME AS SOON AS THE RAIN LIGHTENS UP.
AH! YUMI-CHAN, YOU LIVE ON THIRD BLOCK, RIGHT? I'LL WALK PART OF THE WAY WITH YOU.
WELL, EXCUSE ME
IF I WALK FOR SEVEN, EIGHT HOURS, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO MAKE IT.
MY WIFE IS IN THE LAST TERM OF HER PREG-NANCY RIGHT NOW. .



TO MY HOUSE.

LET'S GO HOME.

I HAVE TO GO HOME.

LET'S GO HOME!

OH... SOMEONE IS ALREADY HERE.
I-I APOLOGIZE.
ISN'T THE FACT THAT ALL THE WINDOWS IN THIS BUILDING ARE SEALED SHUT A MISTAKE IN CONSTRUCTION?!
THEN... AREN'T YOU NOSTALGIC FOR YOUR HOME BACK IN SHANGHAI?
TO THE POINT THAT YOU WOULD SWIM THE OCEAN TO GET BACK?
HA! HOW STUPID!
RIGHT NOW, I'M LIVING IN A WEST SHINJUKU HOTEL.
THAT ISN'T MY HOME.
TAIZUU, AREN'T YOU GOING TO GO HOME AS WELL?
ALL OF THE OTHER TENANTS CLOSED SHOP RIGHT AWAY AND WENT HOME.

THERE IS NO SMOKE FROM THE PEOPLE OR AIRPLANES INTRUDING THE SKIES.
BUT THIS IS...
...THE REAL HEAT OF A JAPANESE SUMMER.
AND THAT...
...THE REAL BRIGHTNESS OF THE MOON.
WOW...

COME HERE.

COME HERE.

COME HERE.

TO YOUR HOUSE...TO YOUR HOME...

TO THE PLACE WHERE IT ALL BEGAN.

TONIGHT WAS A FULL MOON.

LET'S GO HOME.
LET'S GO BACK TO THE SEA.
BACK TO THE PLACE WHERE WE WERE ALL BORN.

THANK YOU FOR ACCOMPLISHING SUCH A BIG REQUEST THIS TIME.
COUNT.
I COULD NOT FIND THE PATH TO THE SEA.
WITH ALL OF THE MAN-MADE LIGHTS, EVEN THE NIGHT LOOKED LIKE THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.
WHEN I HAD FINALLY AWOKEN FROM MY SLUMBER, EVERYTHING WAS COVERED IN ASPHALT.
I AM GLAD THAT I WAS ABLE TO BE OF SERVICE TO YOU.
...FOR THE TRYST WITH MY PARTNER.
BUT, WITH THIS, I WILL MAKE IT IN TIME...

I HOPE THAT YOU WILL ALSO PRAY THAT I HAVE MANY CHILDREN PEACEFULLY.
YES, OF COURSE.
THEN, I WISH YOU GOOD HEALTH.
WH-WHAT WAS THAT JUST NOW?!
WAS THAT SOME SORT OF GHOST?! SOME SORT OF SPIRIT?!
!!

NORMALLY, SHE STAYS IN HER POND, BUT...
...ONCE, EVERY HUNDRED YEARS DURING THEIR MATING SEASON, SHE GOES BACK TO THE SEA.
HOW RUDE.
SHE IS THE MASTER THAT LIVES IN THE POND OF GYOEN.
MASTER?!
MATING...?
HUNDRED...?
I HOPE YOU DON'T SAY SUCH RIDICULOUS THINGS.
IF SOMETHING LIKE THAT GOT OUT, ALL OF NEO CHINATOWN MIGHT HAVE TO BE SHUT DOWN.
.....
AH!
C-COULD IT BE THAT TODAY'S BLACKOUT...YOU CAUSED--?!
SHHH!
TAIZUU.

...AND THEN BECOME THE FROTH OF THE SEA.

THE MATING THAT HAPPENS ONCE EVERY 100 YEARS

A NEW HUSBAND AND WIFE WILL SPEND ONE NIGHT TOGETHER....

..IS THE JOURNEY TOWARD DEATH.

THE WEDDING PROCESSION...

I SHOULD GO BACK TO THE SEA

BACK TO MY BIRTH PLACE

I SHOULD GO BACK TO MY HOME

LET'S GO HOME.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING BY YOURSELF?!
I'M ALREADY...
WHERE... YOU SAID...
MIE!!
YUUKI?!

YUU-CHAN...
I SAID SOME TERRIBLE THINGS...
I'M SO SORRY!
I'M SORRY!! I WAS DRUNK BEFORE!
I HAD SOME BAD THINGS HAPPEN AT WORK, SO I WAS REALLY FRUSTRATED...

PLEASE, DO THE SURGERY!!
I'LL HELP YOU WITH THE COST.
AND ALSO...

THERE WAS A CALL FROM THE HOSPITAL...

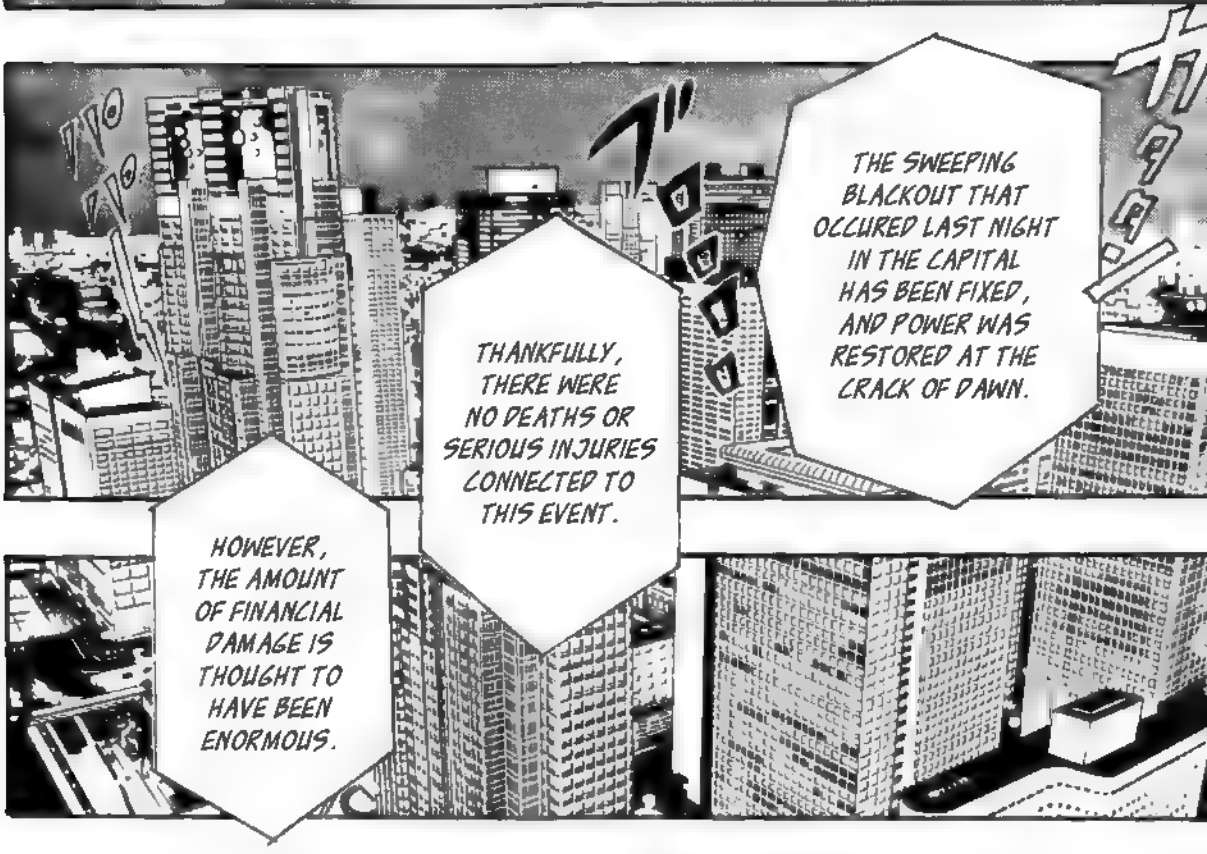
THEY SAID THAT IF I WAS FAMILY, I SHOULD HURRY AND CONVINCE YOU TO GET THE SURGERY.

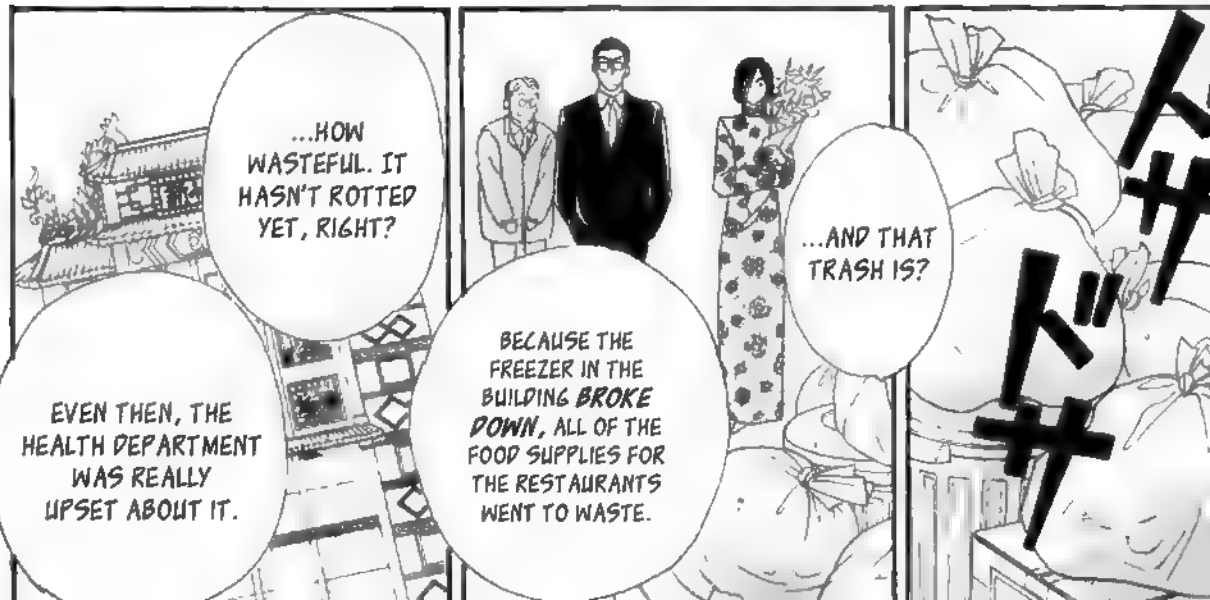
I... FINALLY DECIDED.
I SHOULD MEET YOUR PARENTS PROPERLY AND...

...YOU KNOW... I WANT TO MEET THEM FORMALLY.

...LET'S GO BACK TOGETHER... TO YOUR HOMETOWN.
...HUH?

SO YOU SHOULD JUST GET THAT BUMP IN YOUR STOMACH TAKEN OUT AND...
...KEEP GOING.
YOU HAVE TO KEEP LIVING...
...FOR ME.


THE SWEEPING BLACKOUT THAT OCCURED LAST NIGHT IN THE CAPITAL HAS BEEN FIXED, AND POWER WAS RESTORED AT THE CRACK OF DAWN.
THANKFULLY, THERE WERE NO DEATHS OR SERIOUS INJURIES CONNECTED TO THIS EVENT.
HOWEVER, THE AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL DAMAGE IS THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN ENORMOUS.


...HOW WASTEFUL. IT HASN'T ROTTED YET, RIGHT?
EVEN THEN, THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT WAS REALLY UPSET ABOUT IT.
BECAUSE THE FREEZER IN THE BUILDING BROKE DOWN, ALL OF THE FOOD SUPPLIES FOR THE RESTAURANTS WENT TO WASTE.
...AND THAT TRASH IS?

AROUND JUNE OF NEXT YEAR, THERE WILL BE A LOT OF CONGRATULATIONS.
HUH?
HEH HEH ...
THAT'S NOT TRUE.
THE ONLY HAPPY ONES ARE THE CROWS.
ANCIENT TIMES?
HASN'T IT BEEN TRUE SINCE ANCIENT TIMES THAT AFTER A BLACKOUT, THERE IS ALWAYS A BABY BOOM?

THE CEREMONY OF LIFE AND DEATH THAT HAPPENS ON THE NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON...

STORY 6 END

Pet Shop of Horrors: Tokyo has proudly published its 2nd volume! Clap Clap! Long time no see. This is Matsuri Akino. I'm sorry that I always write these by hand and that they are so hard to read.

The manga that follows is a side story I drew a couple of years back about Count D's father. The medical doctor Wescar-kun is currently published in Asahi Sonarama as a bonus called "Petslop" and is in its 7th volume. Please take a look at this as well. Lately, it has become popular to translate Japanese manga overseas, and "Pet Shop of Horrors" has also been translated to Chinese. There seems to be a German version of it as well. I get a cold sweat to think that native people would be reading this. I draw the backgrounds pretty lazily. I hope that you read with a big heart and global mindset. Matamite ne! See you!! Bis bald!!!

SUCH AN IDEAL SET OF PROPORTIONS.
SO BEAUTIFUL...!!
THE WRINKLES BETWEEN THE EYEBROWS SHOW SUCH INTELLIGENCE!
STRONG LOOKING SHOULDERS AND A SEXY HIPLINE....
A PEACEFUL DEMEANOR... SUCH WONDERFUL HAIR...
WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME TO MY SHOP?

番外編／Dignity

SIDE STORY

ARE YOU ALONE?
WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET SOME TEA TOGETHER?
I HAVE BEEN TO TOKYO BEFORE. I HAVE A FRIEND WHO IS WORKING AT THE SEIAGAYAKU WARD.
JAPANESE
CIAO! SENIORITA!
AND HIS ITALIAN IS PERFECT.
A GUY?
...I AM ALSO DEFINITELY NOT A SENIORITA.
I'M SORRY, BUT I AM NOT A BUBBLY JAPANESE TOURIST AND...
I AM LOOKING TO BUY RARE PETS.
YES.
BUSINESS?
AND I AM HERE IN VENICE ON BUSINESS.

YES, THEY WERE EVERYWHERE IN THE CITY.
IT'S THE WINGED LION STATUE THAT SYMBOLIZES OUR CITY'S PATRON SAINT, SAN MARCO.
HA HA HA! BUT THAT IS NOT A REAL LION...
EVEN IF THIS CITY DROWNS COMPLETELY SOMEDAY, THESE GUYS CAN RUN BY FLYING AWAY.
BUT OF ALL OF THEM, I LIKE THIS ONE THE BEST.
I SEE...YOU HAVE GOOD TASTE.
LATELY, BECAUSE OF THE SINKING GROUNDS AND GLOBAL WARMING .
THE AQUA ALTA WILL SOMEDAY CONSUME THE SAN MARCO SQUARE IN WATER.

...OH, NOTHING.
WHAT?
HUH?
PERHAPS ...
BY THE WAY, ARE YOU RETRACTING YOUR OFFER FOR SOME TEA?
OH!
I WOULD LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS FOR A BIT.
... HAPPILY.
EVEN IF THEY HAD THE CHANCE TO FLY AWAY SOMEDAY...

...THEY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO ESCAPE THIS PLANET.
UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, 1975
PROFESSOR FITZ, THE MATERIALS I BORROWED A FEW DAYS AGO--
AHHHH!! HURRY AND CLOSE THAT DOOR!!
WH-WHAT IS IT?!
SHHH!

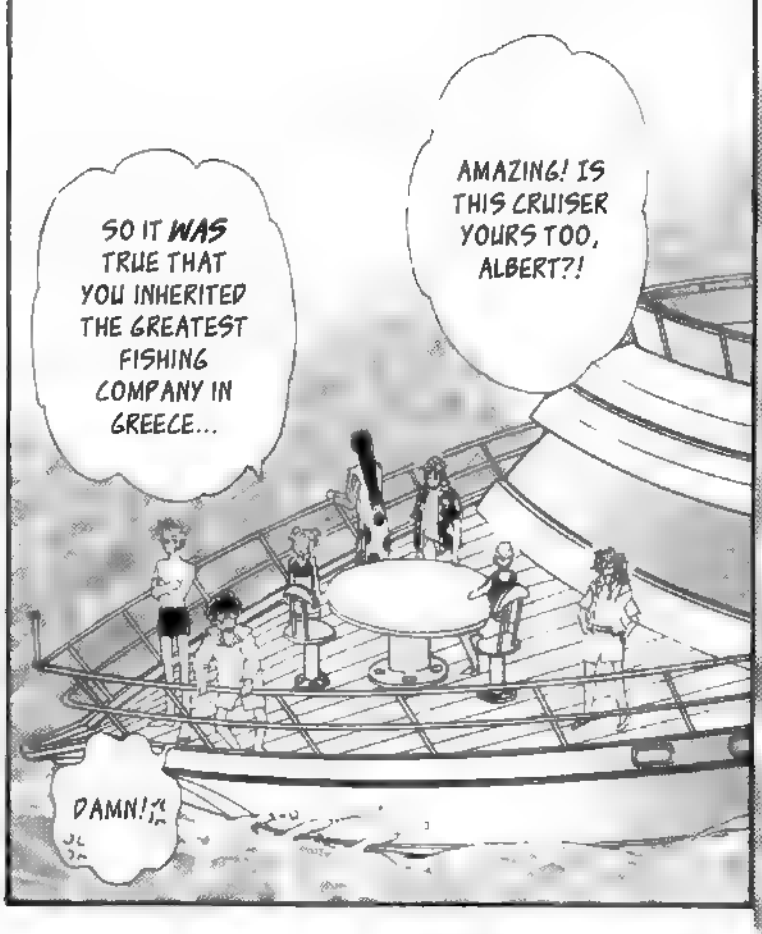
JEN-NIFER?!
Buzz
DON'T BE SCARED. YOU CAN COME OUT...
HIDE AND SEEK IS OVER, JENNIFER-CHAN!
JEN-NIFER?
OH, JENNIFER. YOU'RE SUCH AN EXCITABLE GIRL.
WELL! LET'S PUT YOU BACK HOME.
HEH... OVERREACTING FROM JUST ONE FLY...
OH, MY... BUT IF JUST THIS ONE FLY...
AH, YES, THE STUDENT OVER THERE.
WHEW! THERE WE GO.
CAN YOU PLEASE LEAVE THE CLASS MATERIALS YOU'RE RETURNING ON THAT TABLE?
A-A FRUIT FLY...?!

...WENT OUT AND PRODUCED EGGS...
IN THREE YEARS, THE CORNFIELDS OF AMERICA WOULD BE COMPLETELY DESTROYED.
HUH...?!
HEY, WESCAR!
DID YOU SEE? PROFESSOR FITZ'S NEW ASSISTANT...
YEAH. .A WEIRD PERSON WHO NAMED A FLY...
...IS AN EXCHANGE STUDENT FROM HONG KONG
...SMILING IN SUCH-A-SARCASTIC WAY.

I'LL WARN YOU JUST IN CASE, BUT...
...THAT'S A GUY.
EH?!
GUYS!!
I WONDER WHERE SHE LIVES.
AGE?
WHAT IS HER NAME?
OH! SPEAK OF THE DEVIL.
A GUY?!
WHAT?! YOU GUYS THOUGHT HE WAS A WOMAN?
I KNEW THAT FROM THE MOMENT I MET HIM.
BAM!
WITH HIS FIST!
AH! HE HIT HIM.
HE'S PRETTY MANLY
NO! AT THIS POINT, I DON'T CARE IF HE'S A GUY.
ALBERT?!

HIS ORIENTAL SMILE AND HIS INTERESTING WAY OF SPEAKING...
...MADE THEM FLOCK TO HIM LIKE HE WAS A DRUG.
AFTER THE END OF THE VIETNAM WAR IN 1975, THERE WERE STUDENTS WHO LOOKED FOR NEW THRILLS.
THEY WELCOMED THIS CHINESE MAN, COUNT D, AS A NEW STUDENT.
DAMN IT ALL.
WHY IS THAT GUY SO POPULAR?!
55
...IS A FACE THAT LAUGHS AT US WITH COLD EYES.
UNDERNEATH THAT THIN SMILE...
I WON'T BE FOOLED.

OH, YEAH. NEAR THE SEA, THERE WAS A SIGHTING OF AN ALMOST EXTINCT ACTINIA FISH.
I'M SORRY, BUT I HAVE RESEARCH ..
HE JUST WON'T GIVE UP.
WON'T YOU COME TO MY FAMILY'S VILLA ON THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA?
...COME ON, D!
OH
I'LL GO!
HUH?!
WESCAR, YOU'RE GOING TOO, RIGHT?!
ALBERT!! ME, TOO.
I'LL GO, TOO!
ME, TOO!

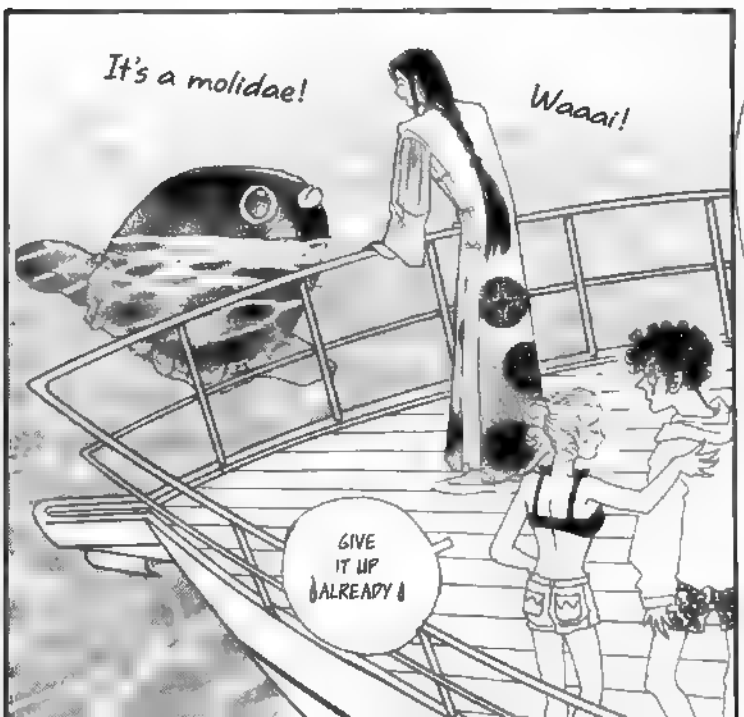

AMAZING! IS THIS CRUISER YOURS TOO, ALBERT?!
SO IT WAS TRUE THAT YOU INHERITED THE GREATEST FISHING COMPANY IN GREECE...
DAMN!

YES...
D, HOW ABOUT IT? ARE YOU HAVING A GOOD TIME?

AH. WAIT A BIT, EVERYONE.
LET'S GO DIVING FOR A BIT.
THIS PLACE IS CONSIDERED A GOOD DIVING SPOT.

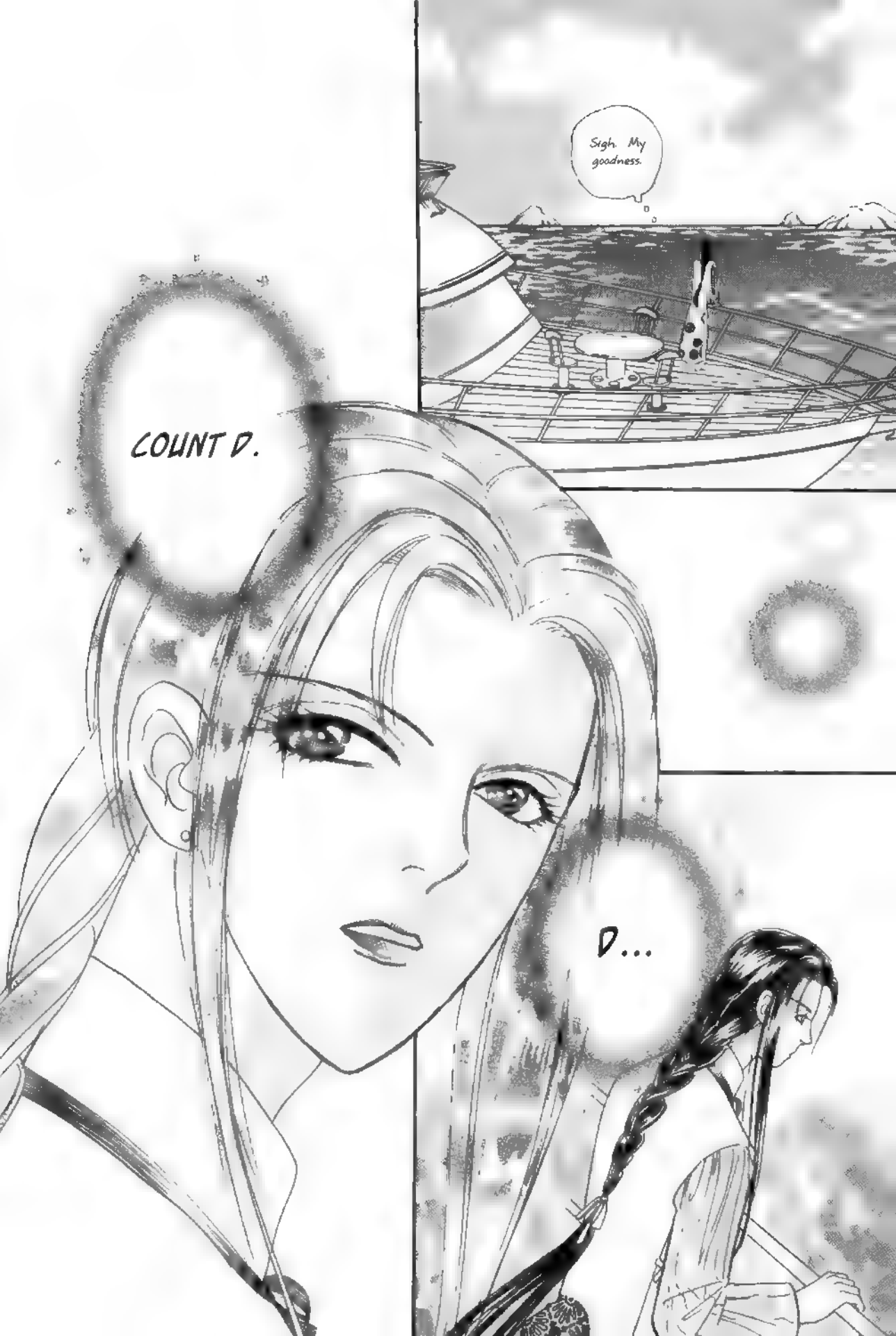
IT SHOULD BE ABOUT TIME.
LOOK AT THE THREE LITTLE ISLANDS IN THE WATER...
HUH?
AH...
A BUNCH OF STONES THAT LOOK LIKE PILLARS ARE COMING UP!!
WHAT IS THAT?!

BUT ABOUT 2,000 YEARS AGO, THE ERUPTION OF A VOLCANO CAUSED THE GROUND TO SINK AND IT WENT UNDER THE SEA IN ONE NIGHT.
THAT ISLAND USED TO HOLD A SMALL SHRINE IN THE ANCIENT GREEKS' TIME...
THEN, THE PEOPLE LIVING THERE WERE PULLED UNDER, TOO?
NOW, ONLY ONCE A YEAR WHEN THE GREAT SEA PULLS ITSELF BACK CAN YOU SEE THE POINT WHERE THE SHRINE WAS BUILT.
IT IS ABOUT TO BECOME ONE OF THE WORLD'S VALUABLE TREASURES.
YEAH. SINCE IT WAS AROUND THAT TIME, THERE COULD HAVE BEEN SOME OF CAESAR'S OR NERO'S RELATIVES LIVING THERE.


It's a molidae!
Waaai!
GIVE IT UP ALREADY

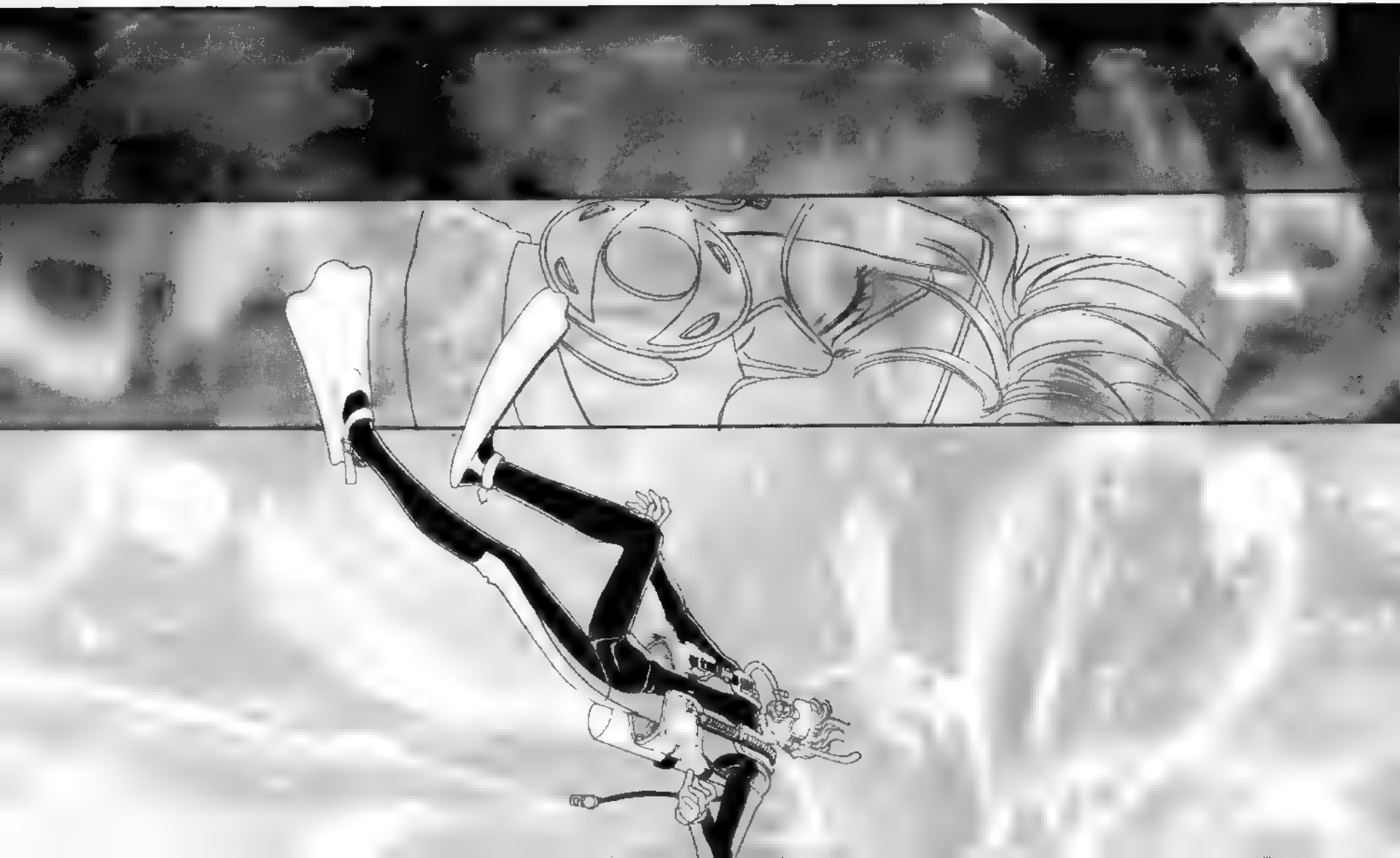
SEE? ISN'T IT ROMANTIC, D?!

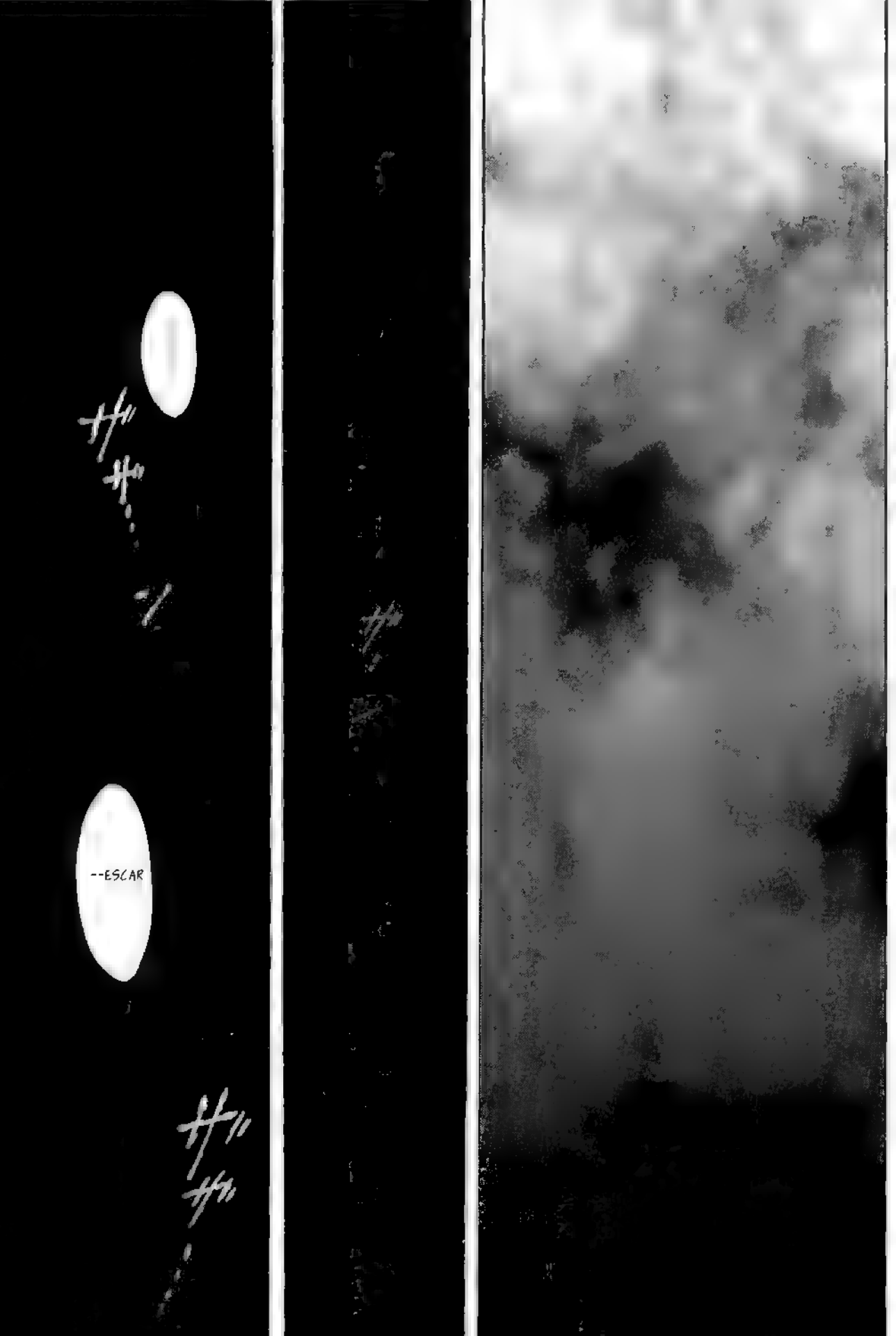
WE HAVE A SUIT PREPARED FOR YOU AS WELL.
WHAT ABOUT YOU, D?
I'M ALL RIGHT.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THINGS UP HERE.
WELL, BE CAREFUL EVERYONE!
WELL, WE'RE GOING TO GO DIVING.
THEN, ME TOO!
YOU'RE COMING WITH US!


Sigh. My goodness.
COUNT D.
D...

HM?!
OH! THAT'S WEIRD CORAL.
I SHOULD TAKE A PICTURE.
D...?!
WHAT?! THAT'S A LITTLE BIG FOR A TROPICAL FISH...
IT CAN'T BE...

AH!
THAT GUY .HE'S SWIMMING WITHOUT AN AIR-TANK OR SUIT!
A CAVE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA. ?!
THIS AREA IS 15 METERS UNDERWATER!
AH! THAT'S DANGEROUS.
UGH?!
THE CURRENT IS FAST...!!
I'LL BE SUCKED IN!
WAIT, D!!




--ESCAR

!!
D...?
IS THAT YOU, D?!
YES.
WESCAR!!
HUH?!
WHERE ARE YOU, D?
M-MY EYES ARE...
I CAN'T SEE!!
WESCAR, CALM DOWN PLEASE.
IT IS PITCH BLACK IN HERE.
IT ISN'T THAT YOU HAVE BECOME BLIND.
P-PITCH BLACK..?!
WHERE EXACTLY--?

THE ENTRANCE WAS UNDERWATER, BUT THE OTHER SIDE SEEMS TO BE VERY OPEN.
WE ARE IN AN UNDERGROUND CAVE IN THE ISLAND.
AH...!!
LUCKILY, THERE IS ALSO OXYGEN.
...I SEE.
THERE, BEHIND YOU, IS THE PATH TO GET BACK INTO THE SEA.
CHINESE PEOPLE HAVE REALLY GOOD NIGHT VISION.
.....
I HAVE A STROBE ON MY UNDERWATER CAMERA.
OH YEAH?!
YOU'RE SAYING THIS, BUT YOU CAN SEE?! IN THIS PITCH-BLACKNESS?!
AH! WESCAR?! DON'T STAND UP SO SUDDENLY
THUNK
...THE CEILING IS LOW THERE.
.....

I REALLY AM HERE.
SEE?
AH..
YEAH...
SMILING LIKE HE CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH ME AGAIN...
SHIT!
...SO THERE MIGHT BE A PATHWAY OUT TO THE MIDDLE OF THE ISLAND...
DEEPER IN, IT STARTS TO GO UPWARD.
IT LOOKS LIKE A LIMESTONE CAVE.

HEE HEE HEE ...
HO HO HO ...
HEE HEE HEE!
HEH HEH
EHEH ~
NOOO, I DIDN'T.
DON'T LIE! YOU'RE ALWAYS--
HM?
WHAT IS IT?!
YOU JUST LAUGHED AT ME!!
AND IT'S NOT JUST ONE VOICE.
THEY'RE WOMEN'S VOICES.
YES... I HEARD IT, TOO.
AGAIN! IT CAME FROM THAT WAY
TWITCH TWITCH
KHUNK
LET'S GO, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET OUTSIDE
AH! WESCAR, THAT WAY IS...
HERE.

AH THERE'S A BIG BUMP ON YOUR LEFT SIDE.
SHIT...
WH... WHY ARE YOU...
...WHY ARE YOU SPECIALIZING IN DNA RESEARCH?
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
WHY ARE YOU A MEDICINE MAJOR?
I...I DID IT BECAUSE I'M IN A FAMILY OF DOCTORS.
NO...
HEY
YES?

THAT SEEMS LIKE A MADE UP EXCUSE
I SEE...
I WANTED TO DO A JOB THAT SAVES PEOPLE'S LIVES...
AND SO, THE AMERICANS GO OFF TO VIETNAM...
..AND START A WAR.
SO THEN WHAT MAKES YOU SO GREAT?!
USING DNA RESEARCH, YOU MAKE NEW SPECIES OF FLIES AS WELL AS NEW SPECIES OF DISEASES!
ARE YOU PLANNING ON MAKING A CLONE OF A HUMAN SOMEDAY?
I...
...I JUST...
I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT MYSELF.
HUH...?

WHAT EXACTLY IS THE BLOOD THAT RUNS THROUGH MY VEINS?
BLOOD...?!
I WANT TO KNOW WHAT MY PURPOSE IN LIFE IS.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN...?
UMPH! HEY!
WHY DID YOU STOP SUDDENLY?!
IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S A DEAD END HERE.
HUH?!
HEE HEE HEE!
HO HO HO!
KYAAA HA HA!
THERE... THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE REALLY CLOSE!!
WESCAR..
TRY SHOOTING YOUR STROBE AGAIN.
AH... YEAH!

クスクス
TH...
THIS IS--
UWAAH!!

I'M VERY SORRY TO HAVE FRIGHTENED YOU.
PLEASE, DON'T WORRY ABOUT US
IS THAT A BIT BETTER?
THIS ROOM HAS SOME GLOW DUST IN THE WALLS...
THE ONLY ENTRANCE TO THIS CAVE FELL COMPLETELY UNDERWATER TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA AND IT WAS CLOSED OFF TO THE OUTSIDE.
YES... IT SEEMS THAT ACCORDING TO LEGEND, THIS ISLAND SANK IN ONE NIGHT DURING A VOLCANIC ERUPTION.
SO... YOU GUYS HAVE BEEN LIVING *HERE* THE WHOLE TIME?!
IN THIS DARK CAVE, WITH NO LIGHT?!
W- WAIT A MINUTE!
THEN, FOR 2,000 YEARS--?!
WE ARE THE DESCENDENTS OF THE ONES WHO COULD NOT ESCAPE IN TIME AND SURVIVED HERE.

I DON'T KNOW...
I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG IT'S BEEN. WE ARE BORN HERE AND WE DIE HERE.
WH- WHAT A TERRIBLE THING!!
TO THINK THERE WAS A LOST WORLD...!!
CONAN DOYLE AND H.G. WELLS WOULD BE SHOCKED!!

WESCAR.

BUT, YOU CAN FEEL SAFE NOW.
WE CAN CALL A RESCUE TEAM AND GET YOU ALL TO THE OUTSIDE.

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO CALL FOR THAT RESCUE?
HUH...?

THE GRECIAN GOVERNMENT... NO, THE WHOLE WORLD WOULD TAKE CARE OF YOU!
WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF THE 20TH CENTURY! YEAH!!

HOW WILL WE SWIM BACK THROUGH A DARK 30 METER TUNNEL THAT HAS OBSTACLES IN ITS WAY?
YOUR AIR TANK IS ALMOST EMPTY.
IF IT WERE THAT EASY TO GET OUTSIDE, THESE PEOPLE WOULD NEVER HAVE STAYED HERE FOR 2,000 YEARS.
.....
TH-THEN...
WE'RE STUCK HERE TOO...?!
FOREVER, LIKE THIS?!

...BECAUSE OF THE VOLCANIC ENVIRONMENT, THE WATER AND AIR ARE VERY CLEAN AND USABLE.
WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE A SMALL AMOUNT OF FISH AND CLAMS THROUGH THE ENTRANCE TO THE SEA.
THIS IS A PRETTY REASONABLE PLACE TO LIVE.
QUIT KIDDING AROUND!! THERE'S NO WAY!
I CAN'T LIVE IN THIS KIND OF DARKNESS FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!!
NOW, WE CANNOT--
WE HAVE DREAMED OF THE GREAT BLUE SKY THAT OUR ANCESTORS SAW IN THE FAR PAST, BUT...
YOU PEOPLE SHOULDN'T GIVE UP.
DON'T THROW AWAY HOPE!!
DON'T SAY SUCH STUPID THINGS!!
THERE HAS TO BE SOME WAY TO BE SAVED!!

HOPE...
THAT HOPE HAS JUST BEEN ANSWERED.
...FINALLY, JUST A FEW DAYS AGO, THE LAST MALE OF OUR KIND PASSED AWAY.
PROBABLY BECAUSE OF THE LARGE AMOUNT OF INBREEDING, THE BALANCE OF THE MEN AND WOMEN OF OUR KIND HAS FALLEN APART.
HUH...?!
THERE ARE ONLY WOMEN HERE!!
N
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...

Y-YOU CAN'T MEAN...
THAT YOU WANT US TO BE YOUR NEW HUSBANDS?!

N-NO!
DON'T JOKE AROUND AT A TIME LIKE--!!

OH, MY, WESCAR! YOU'LL BE A KING AND HAVE HAREMS!
AS A MAN, THERE COULD BE NO GREATER HAPPINESS THEN THIS, RIGHT?

H-HEY, D. THIS IS REALLY BAD.
IF WE REALLY STAY IN A PLACE LIKE THIS...
THEY WON'T LET US GO UNTIL WE DIE!

HUH?!

COUNT D...
YOU ARE OUR FINAL HOPE.
D!
HEY, STOP! ALL OF YOU!
I SAID, GET AWAY!!

UWAAAAAAAAH!!
D! COME ON!

CHUNK
SH-T
THE SOUND OF THE SEA?!
COUNT!
COUNT D!!
!!
WE GOT BACK TO THE PLACE WE STARTED FROM!

YOU CAN SEE EVEN IF IT'S PRETTY DARK, RIGHT?!
WESCAR?
THERE ISN'T MUCH, BUT IT HAS SOME AIR LEFT.
IF YOU RIDE ON THAT, YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET OUT TO SEA.
IN SIX HOURS THE HIGH TIDE WILL COME IN.
JUDGING FROM THE SPEED OF THE CURRENT IN THE TUNNEL LAST TIME...
I CAN ESCAPE, OF COURSE... BUT WE'LL BE ABLE TO HELP THE WOMEN ESCAPE AS WELL!
NO... IF YOU MAKE IT BACK...
EVEN IF JUST ONE OF US...
GOODNESS. AMERICANS JUST DON'T KNOW WHEN THEY'RE BEAT!
And it's heavy.
SHUT UP!!
IF THERE IS EVEN A 1% CHANCE OF SURVIVING, YOU HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO TAKE IT!!

MMPH
?!
IT'S TRUE...
I CANNOT LET THE WOMEN'S FEELINGS COME TO NOTHING.
H-HEY, D?!
Mmmph!
PLEASE HOLD ON TIGHTLY.
...CHINESE PEOPLE ARE GOOD AT SWIMMING.
YOU KNOW, OF COURSE...
GOMRPHRR...

THE AIR...

BWAAAH!
COUNT?
WE WERE SO WORRIED. WHERE DID THE BOTH OF YOU GO?!
THANK GOODNESS!!
WESCAR!!
COUNT!!
.....
WESCAR CAME TO SAVE ME AFTER I FELL FROM THE BOAT AND WAS WASHED AWAY.
I JUST CALLED THE COAST GUARD! I'LL HAVE TO CANCEL THE CALL.
WE-WELL, ANYWAYS. I'M GLAD BOTH OF YOU ARE SAFE...

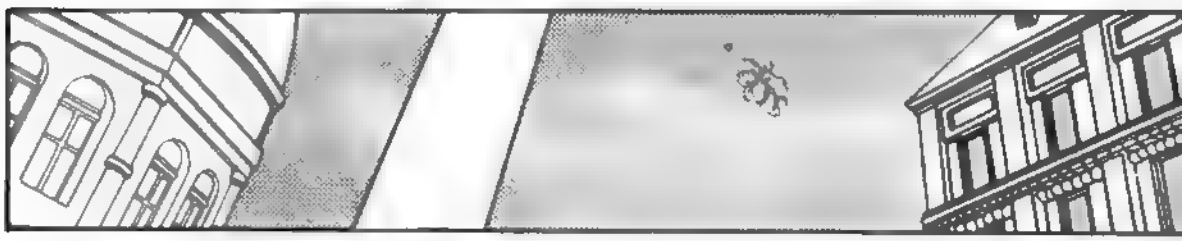
RESCUE...
TH-THAT'S RIGHT!!
THERE ARE ANCIENT GRECIANS LIVING UNDER THE GROUND ON THAT ISLAND!
BECAUSE OF THE SINKING LAND, THE WAY OUT WAS CLOSED AND THEY'VE BEEN LIVING IN AN UNDERGROUND CAVE FOR 2,000 YEARS!
ANCIENT GRECIANS?
THOSE WOMEN?!
WE HAVE TO SAVE THOSE WOMEN!
BUT, THEIR EYES... THEY HAVE NO EYES...
YEAH!! THEY WERE TRYING TO MAKE US THE KINGS OF THEIR HAREM.
RIGHT? D!!

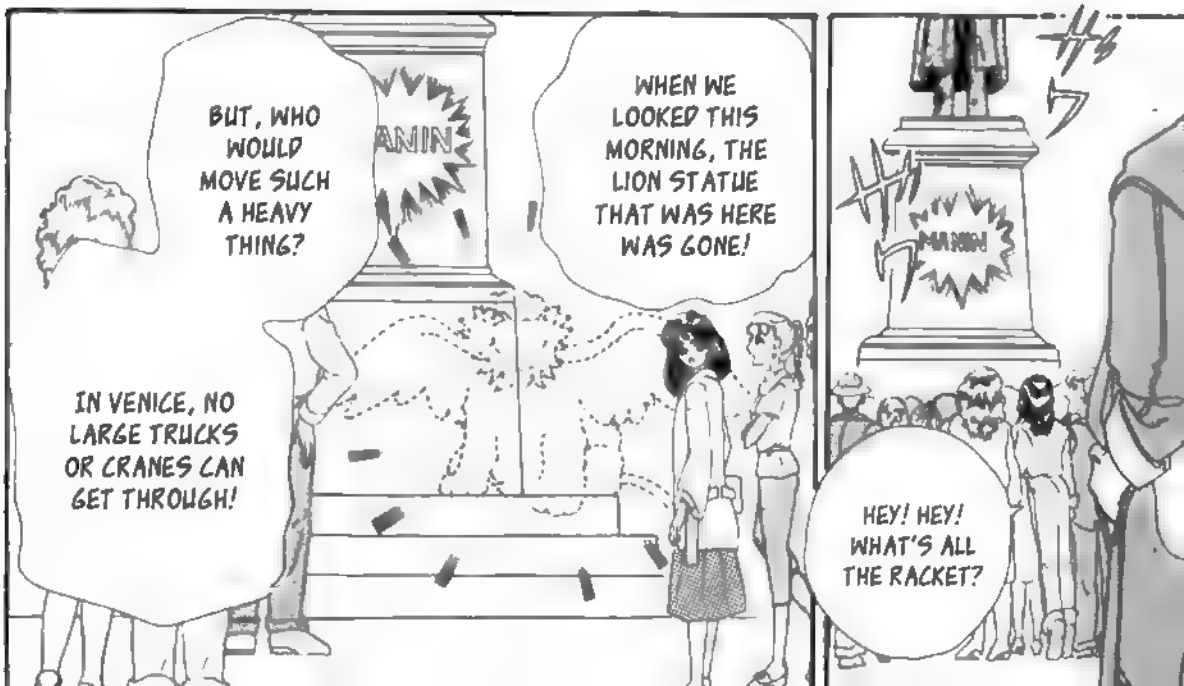
HM?
WAS THERE SOMEONE THERE?
...HEY... DON'T PLAY DUMB!
YOU SAW THAT PLACE TOO, DIDN'T YOU?!
YOU'RE NOT THINKING OF LEAVING THOSE WOMEN BEHIND?!
WESCAR, AREN'T YOU JUST HAVING A BAD TRIP FROM TOO MUCH SWIMMING?!
You have tons of bruises.
NO WAY...
...OH, YEAH!!
I HAVE PROOF!
THERE SHOULD HAVE BEEN PICTURES TAKEN WHEN I USED THE STROBE!
LET'S GO BACK AND HAVE THEM DEVELOPED IMME-DIATELY!

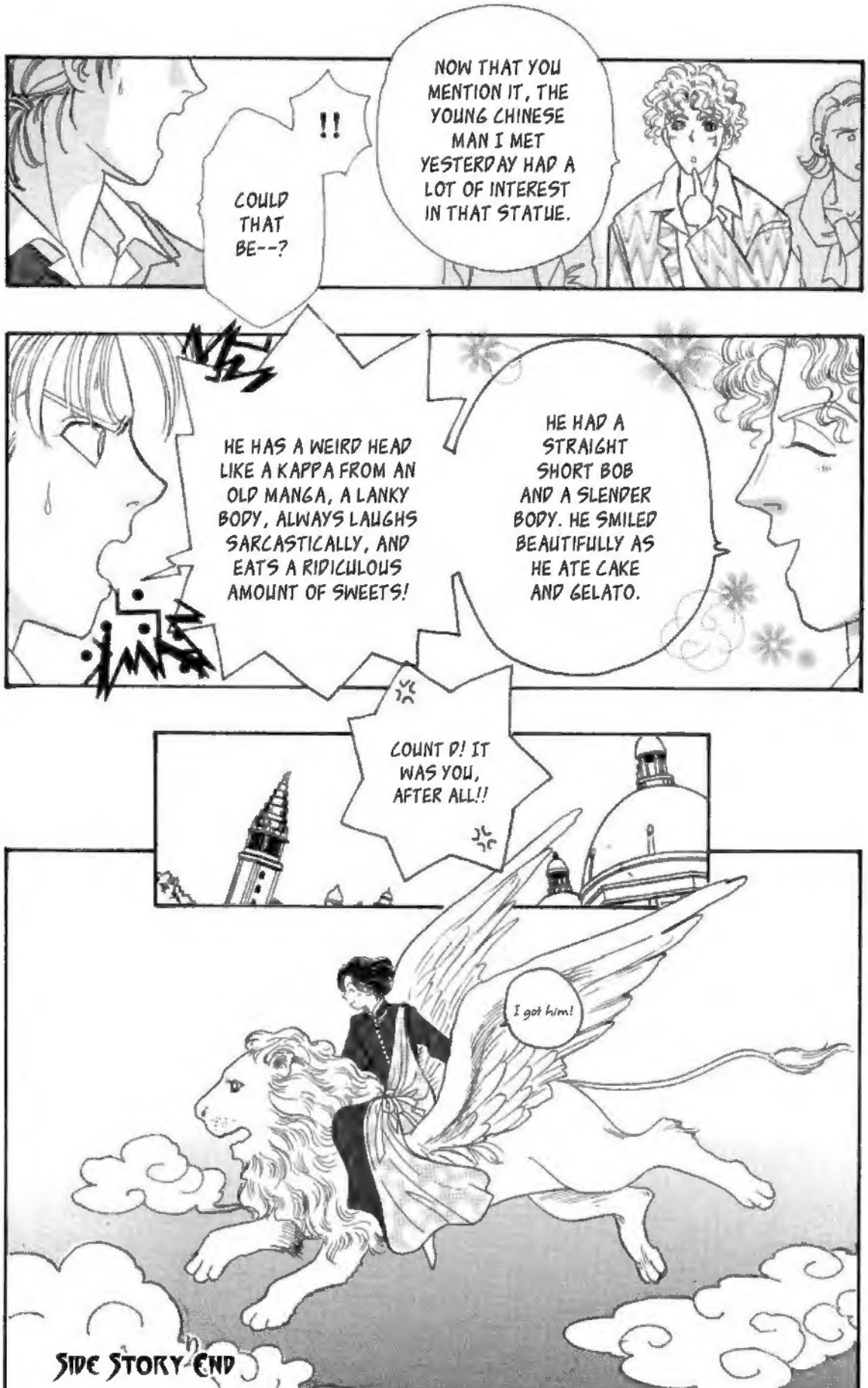
THIS... IS...
NO WAY ...
THIS CAN'T BE!
THEY LOOK LIKE SWALLOWS. THEY'VE BECOME ALBINO AND LOST THEIR EYESIGHT!
BU...BUT, SURELY...

WHEN WE WERE THERE...
WHAT *THOSE WOMEN* GAVE TO ME WERE THESE EGGS.
I'LL TRY TO HATCH THESE IN THE LAB.
THEN, I WILL REPAIR THEIR DNA.
SO THAT SOMEDAY, THEIR DESCEN-DANTS...
...WILL BE ABLE TO FIND LIGHT IN THEIR EYES AGAIN.
THIS IS THE REASON THAT I DECIDED TO PURSUE THIS KIND OF JOB.
THE LAST HOPE OF A DYING SPECIES.

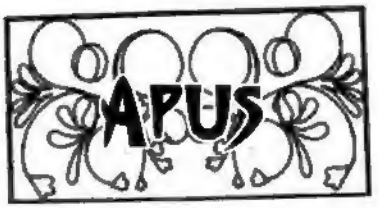
COUNT D, LET ME GET ONTO YOUR BOAT



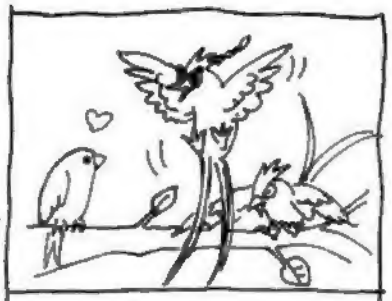

BUT, WHO WOULD MOVE SUCH A HEAVY THING?
WHEN WE LOOKED THIS MORNING, THE LION STATUE THAT WAS HERE WAS GONE!
IN VENICE, NO LARGE TRUCKS OR CRANES CAN GET THROUGH!
HEY! HEY! WHAT'S ALL THE RACKET?


!!
COULD THAT BE--?
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, THE YOUNG CHINESE MAN I MET YESTERDAY HAD A LOT OF INTEREST IN THAT STATUE.
HE HAS A WEIRD HEAD LIKE A KAPPA FROM AN OLD MANGA, A LANKY BODY, ALWAYS LAUGHS SARCASTICALLY, AND EATS A RIDICULOUS AMOUNT OF SWEETS!
HE HAD A STRAIGHT SHORT BOB AND A SLENDER BODY. HE SMILED BEAUTIFULLY AS HE ATE CAKE AND GELATO.
COUNT D! IT WAS YOU, AFTER ALL!!
I got him!
SIDE STORY END

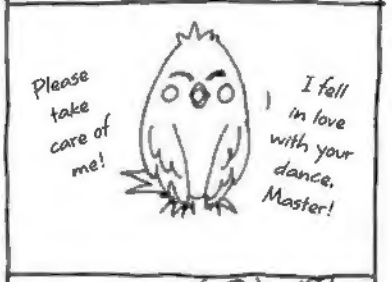
Pet catalog



My teacher and my dance combination are the best in this forest!

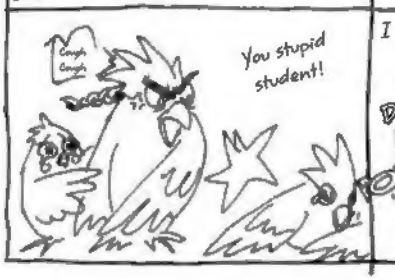


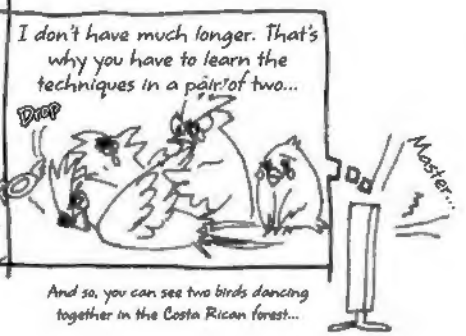
Then a new student joins in...



Lately, Master has been leaving me, the student, behind and spending time teaching the new one.

The Master doesn't need me anymore, after all...



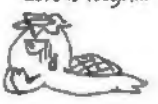


And so, you can see two birds dancing together in the Costa Rican forest...

In most bird and insect species, the males are much more beautiful than the females. Even though they don't look as pretty, the choice to mate is up to the females and it is very hard for the males. In Central America, there is a type of bird whose dance is done with two males (sometimes three) to find mates. The relationship between the two birds is not that of parents or of siblings, but of teacher and student. The two of them together lock on to the heart of a female! But the right to breed is only for the teacher. The student is only a helper. After helping out like this a few times for 5-10 years, they finally become a complete man. The world of nature is very strict. By the way, I have been to a gay bar before, but never a host club.

I imagine these kinds of things while watching the nature channel on NHK.

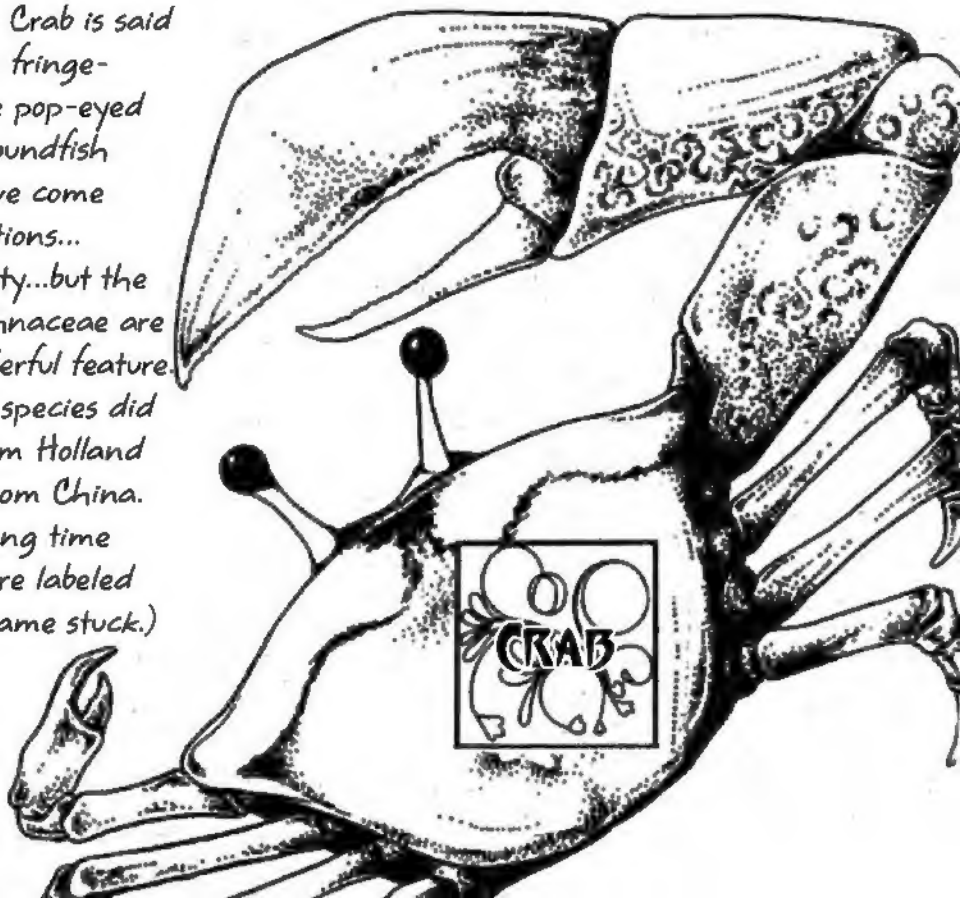
The world of Boy's Love is tough...



Kappa...Oh. That's me. There is a sushi place in Kabuki-cho that is really called "Kappa Sushi." I have, unfortunately, never been there. But, I'm pretty sure it isn't a Kaiten sushi place. Probably.

I was born in the month of July under the Cancer sign. When I read about my astrological sign, it often says that "cancer signs have strong motherly tendencies" but...that...I don't think is really accurate... On Christmas island in the waters of the Indian Ocean, there are crabs that live in the forest that go back to the sea once a year to mate. Before it was easy, but now they get there by walking through streets without caring about the humans who live there. There is a story that before they reach the sea by the full moon, many of them get crushed under the wheels of cars and you can see their bodies along the road. It is a very surreal image.

The Dutch Fiddler Crab is said to be related to the fringe-tailed goldfish. The pop-eyed goldfish and the roundfish are also said to have come from sudden mutations... and are really pretty...but the lumps on the Blechnaceae are considered a wonderful feature. By the way, these species did not really come from Holland and are actually from China. (It seems that a long time ago, all imports were labeled "Dutch" and the name stuck.)



IN OUR NEXT VOLUME...

The stakes increase when the new Pet Shop of Horrors reopens for its third volume. The death of a bird in the city ignites a great crisis that threatens to destroy all of Japan. Is Count D part of the solution...or the problem? Later, it will fall on Count D to help a wife who is treated like a servant and a girl who is imprisoned by her family. But when the Count helps, it usually comes at a steep price. Who will be the one to pay it?

All of this and more fun with Woo-Fei...You know you don't want to miss it.

Volume 3 of Pet Shop of Horrors: Tokyo is coming your way in October, 2008!